



# M U S L I M S IN U. S. S. R.

BY  
B. P. L. B E D I

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**By the same editor**

**FOR MY COUNTRY  
THE INVISIBLE FRONT  
RUSSIA RE-BUILDS  
SOVIET OFFENSIVE ON DEATH AND DISEASE  
RUSSIA TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW  
CONTROVERSIES ANSWERED**

**1947**

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## **For the Honest Reader only**

YOU have opened this book, and you are faced with a picture which must look like a fairy tale.

It is of Moscow, notorious in the Capitalist Press as the City of the Godless In it stands the Jumma Masjid An Imam is in the pulpit preaching to the Faithful

MOSCOW . A MOSQUE ... A MUSLIM IMAM What new Soviet mirage is this to cheat the unsuspecting traveller ? In Soviet Russia the slaughter house of religions that it is made out to be ? Or are the Muslims within its confines living and praying and enjoying the privileges of full and free citizenship ?

For long years the ears of the listening world have been filled with stories of "Godless Soviet Russia." By this venomous chant the enemies of Soviet Russia have attempted to smash the spell which the Socialist Land has woven on the minds of those who have sought to gain their own freedom and give a decent self-respecting life not to the privileged rich, but to those who labour with their hands and brains



Those who are awakening to the red rays of liberation's dawn look towards the Soviet as the Land of Promise, of Freedom and Peace. They look upon Russia not as an "open sesame" of the world's ills, but as a land where the common man and woman have not been prevented from carrying the glorious burden of running the State. As a land where self-respecting citizens of all religions and nationalities have been born out of the ashes of the old slave peasants and workers, on whose tears and sweat Czardom flourished

It is only recently that the world has been able to realise this. This appreciation of what the Soviet Union really stands for has been bought dearly during the terrors of the terrible Nazi advance on to Russian soil. The heroism of the Soviet people shook the world's headlines. Were these the people who had been called cowards? Were these men and women those whom the Western Millionaire Press had depicted as cowed beasts of burden groaning under a dictatorship? The undaunted spirit of the Red Army, and the epic resistance of the civilian population told another story. Another World Lie had been nailed.

The contents of this book give an insight into the life of the millions of Muslims who inhabit the Soviet Union, in the great republics of Uzbekistan,

Kazakistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenia, Tadjikistan and Kirghizia. Such a narrative is of absorbing interest to everyone in India, and particularly in the North, where Muslim culture is part of the national pattern, and where Muslim problems and ways of living are of immediate national importance.

This then is the story of how our Muslim neighbours live a plane's flight away over the snowy Himalaya. Their lives have been spotlighted as they work in farm and factory, as they toil and create the wealth that they themselves enjoy. Here is the Muslim culture irradiated with new ideas, enriching the common life with treasures of art and literature.

The Muslims of the U. S. S. R. are in the midst of rearing a young civilisation, born out of the womb of ancient tradition, and fathered by the new equalitarian outlook. It is an experiment in time and place, magnificent in concept, patient and persevering in execution. These virile peoples of the Muslim republics have taken strides along the hard road to prosperity, tilled their precious soil with modern implements, raised factories, sunk mines. They have built for themselves a new life where standards of living are higher, opportunities more.

It is not only in the Muslim republics that the

Muslims live. Spread all over the Soviet Union are the sons and daughters of Islam who have found their place in the highest positions of honour and responsibility. Among the deathless defenders of Stalingrad were those who had come from the Frontier lands where mosque and skull-cap and typical Eastern dress betoken a civilisation that is brother to our own. They have shown not only to the Soviet Union, but to the wider world that distinctions of race and religion do not make of men lesser or greater beings... that, given equal opportunity, all may make a varied yet equally valuable contribution to the greater life of a nation, or of a brotherhood of nations.

Here then, like a kaleidoscope, unfolds the sort of life they lead, the ideals that inspire them, the future they plan. It is not the imagination of an editor that has made it so. Read of what they are—from their own mouths, for it is only they who speak

HUTS :

B. P. L. BEDI.

MODEL TOWN.

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## Lenin and Stalin's Appeal to Muslims of Russia and the Soviet East

"Henceforth your faith and your customs, your National and Cultural institutions are declared free and inviolable Build up your own national way of life freely and without hindrance You have the right to this

Know that your rights, like rights of all peoples in Russia, are protected by the whole might of the Revolution and its organs "



—October 1917

### TODAY

*The Muslims in the U S S R are governed by their own religious centre in Ufa, headed by the Mufti Abdul Rahman Rassulayev There are 1312 mosques, and 8052 mullahs.*





## CHAPTER I

# Muslims in Soviet Russia

By HALIL RAHMAN NASIR-UD-DIN

*Imam of the Moscow Jama' Masjid, Member of the Muslim Board of Russia*

I, Halil Rahman Nasir-ud-din, Imam of the Great Mosque in Moscow and member of the Muslim Board of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic, want to tell my co-religionists abroad how Muslims in the Soviet Union live

We have many different tribes and nations in the U S S R The Soviet State has liberated all the working people from oppression and slavery and has given equal rights to all citizens, Muslims also have the right to practice their religion freely, to develop their economy, culture and art

According to our Constitution, which the people call by the name of its creator, Stalin, the Church is separated from the State so that Muslims, like people of all other faiths, have the right to practice their religion freely, to perform the Namaz, observe the fasts, make the pilgrimage to the Holy Ka'Abah—in other words in the Soviet Union all religions are equal in the eyes of the law

This was not the case in Tsarist Russia The Tsarist government only supported the Christian religion and the Orthodox Christian Church held the dominant position Muslims could not open their Maktabas and Madrasas and train their children in the true spirit of Islam

In the U.S S R. Muslim religious leaders and their congregations have their spiritual centres in the Muslim Boards which govern all Muslim religious matters and from time to time call conferences of representative leaders for the solution of religious problems

At the present time there are four Muslim Boards in existence—the Muslim Board of Russia in the town of Ufa, the Muslim Board of the North Caucasus in the town of Buinaksk, the Muslim Board of the Transcaucasus in Baku and the Muslim Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan in Tashkent

The conferences of Muslim religious leaders became very active during the holy war against the infidel Hitler obeying the words of our Prophet Mohammed

“ The arming of a warrior going forth to war is equal to participation in the battle. Even the peaceful labour of men and women who replace those who have gone to the war is equal to participation in the fight ”

During the holy war the following Muslim congresses were held Representatives of the Muslims of Russia on 15th May 1942 in the town of Ufa , representatives of the Muslims of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kirghizia and Kazakhstan on 15th October 1943 in the Town of Tashkent , representatives of the Muslims of the Transcaucasus on 28th May 1944 in the town of Baku and representatives of the Muslims of the North Caucasus on 20th July 1944 in the town of Buinaksk

As Imam of the Juma' Masjid in Moscow I attended all these congresses and spoke on religious questions. The congresses discussed questions of the faith and letters received from Muslims in the then occupied regions of the Soviet Union on

The atrocities perpetrated on Muslims by the German Fascists. The congresses resolved to bring these atrocities to the notice of Muslims throughout the world

On Fridays there are usually several thousand Muslims gathered in the Moscow Great Mosque for Namaz. The women also attend the Mosque and pray in a separate half of the building divided from that used by the men

At the time of the great religious festivals in Central Asia, Kazakhstan and Azarbaijan, Namaz in the Great Mosques is of a more solemn nature and is attended by crowds that overflow the Mosques

According to the tenets of Islam Muslims are expected to make the pilgrimage to Mecca and make their obeisance to the Ka'Abah almost every year. A group of Muslims left the Central Asiatic Republics for the pilgrimage and are now on their way back home. They have been fortunate enough to see with their own eyes the tomb of the Prophet Mohammed. I wish that all Muslims may experience this joy and become worthy of Paradise. Amen!

Thanks to the Soviet authorities the tombs of Holy men who have played an important part in the history of Islam are being carefully preserved. These monuments are repaired every year and when necessary are restored. There is, for example, the tomb of the Saint Bagav Ud-Din who was buried in Bukhara in the year 850 of the Hegira. In the Shah-i-Zinda Mausoleum in Samarkand there is buried the Saint Qassam, son of Hazrat Abbas. In Samarkand there are the tombs of many Muslim holy men and statesmen—Emir Timur, Emir Husein and others.

In the October District of the town of Tashkent, there is the tomb of Imam Kaffal Shashi, a relative of Hazrat Abu

Bekr who died in the year 336 of the Hegira The Mausoleum was built later by Emir Timur Throughout Uzbekistan, Turkmenia, Kazakhstan and other Republics there are many monuments to Muslim holy men that are Respected throughout the world These holy places are open to pilgrims who come there from all parts of the Central Asiatic Republics and from Kazakhstan at all times of the year

The Central Asiatic Muslim Board in Tashkent publishes a journal in the Uzbek language written in Arabic script and a Muslim lunar calendar

The president of the Russian Muslim Board, Mufti Abdul Rahman Ibn Sheikh Zeinulla Rasouli is publishing his book "Dini Islam"—"The Tenets of Islam"—in Arabic and Tatar the book will be printed in a large edition and will serve as a guide for all the Muslims of our country

I must also mention the very substantial help which the government of our great Soviet Union has given Muslim religious leaders The government maintains connections with the leaders of religious cults through a Council set up by the Council of people's Commissars of the U S S R All Muslim may apply to this Council with their religious problems and may receive any necessary co-operation or help

In conclusion I want to say the following to my co-religionists abroad

Following the precept laid down in the Holy Qoran the "love of the country is one of the qualities of the faithful," Muslims, together with all the people of the U S S R have taken part in the great struggle against Fascism for the defence of the liberty and progress of their country, for their faith and for truth, for honour and glory

## CHAPTER II

## Soviet Muslim Patriots Speak

We are thy champions and defenders All our  
strength and sinew is thine, O motherland "

—*Kirghiz Poet, Malikov*

\* \* \* \*

" Breathe on the fascist with fire and destroy him  
with the flying sword "

—*Message to Kazakh soldiers from 93-years old Kazakh Poet  
Djamboul*

\* \* \* \*

" Let my rifle now speak for me "

—*Declared Abutalib Gafurov, National Poet of Daghestan, as  
he left for the front*

\* \* \* \*

All we Muslims pray that Allah grant our gallant  
Red Army a speedy victory, and with all our hearts  
and all that we possess we are helping to strengthen  
our beloved socialist country which has ensured to  
us Muslims and to all other peoples all the benefits  
of life, joy and happiness

—*Halil Rahman Nasir-ud-din Imam of the Moscow Jama'  
Masjid*

\* \* \* \*

" The Soviet regime has done one thing which we  
Mohammedans will never forget It has accorded us  
civil equality and religious liberty

—*Mufti Abdul Rahman Rassulyev, President Russian Muslim  
Board*

It was different before the revolution. Could a Mohammedan, for example, ever have dreamed of participating in conferences at the Kremlin in Moscow? Now Bashkirs, Tartars, Uzbeks, and Turkmens share in the sessions of the Supreme Soviet, in congresses and other assemblies held in the Kremlin Palace, on equal terms with their Russian, Ukrainian and Byelo-Russian brothers

That is why the Soviet Union has become our homeland. We cherish it. And when it was attacked we all rose up in its defence. Our people from Bashkria, Crimea, Turkmenistan, Kirghizia and Kazakhstan fought so self-sacrificingly against Hitler's soldiers because they knew that German Fascism would bring a regime a thousand times worse than that of Tzarist days. We know the Germans considered themselves a superior race, privileged to govern the entire world. Their victory would have meant the enslavement of millions of Mohammedans."

## CHAPTER III

## Ishan Baba Khan's Devotion

By MIKHAIL DOLGOPOLOV

Far from the central part of Tashkent, in an old town the Karasaraiksaya Street, lives one of the most eminent Moslem leaders the eighty-year-old *Ishan Babakhan* Ishan Baba et me at the threshold of his home with a deep bow. He wore a broad, grey oriental robe and a white turban—which accentuated his swarthy features with a small, grey beard and pointed moustache.

I interviewed Ishan Babakhan in his reception room whose walls are covered with wonderful eastern rugs, and on the shelves of which stand large bookcases containing old books which are the repositories of a thousand-year-old wisdom of the Moslem peoples. To my question, what was the attitude of the Moslems to the struggle the Soviet Union is waging against the Nazi hordes, Ishan replied, 'The hearts of the Faithful Moslems of Middle Asia are filled with gratitude to Allah when reports come about the victories of the glorious Red Army. The satanic crimes of Hitler's band fill our hearts with a keen hatred. The Fascists trample all human laws and, in their bloody cruelty, they surpass even savage barbarians. Today there is no corner where mothers do not weep over the death of their sons, wives their husbands and children their parents. On the fronts, blood flows in rivers. That is why we rejoice in the victories of the Red Army which is the defender and saviour of mankind from the Hitlerite plague. With great joy did all Moslems.



welcome the news about the debacle of German army near Stalingrad. The Moslems send prayers to Allah that victory may be granted to his army over the mortal enemy. Prayers rising to Heaven call for punishment to the enemy.

These prayers inspire Moslems to work zealously in factories and on collective farm fields. Prayer kindles in the hearts of the Faithful a holy wrath and hatred for the brutal Fascists.

"Recently", continued Ishan, "I visited a number of cities in Central Asia: Samarkand, Bokhara, Ashkhabad and Stalinabad. At my age it was hard to make that journey. But sacred duty impelled me to undertake it. Everywhere I spoke to mullahs and the most respected among the Faithful. I asked them what prayer always achieves its aim. We believe that Allah will hear our prayer and send the Red Army new successes.

## CHAPTER IV

## Heroic Girls of Moslem East

By, ALEXANDER ALEXANDROV

*Stalin prize winner Peoples' Artist of the Soviet Union  
Composer of the Soviet National Anthem*

All the people and the inhabitants of the Soviet East irrespective of religion or nationality, had risen for the defence of their homeland against the Fascist invaders

The ranks of the Red Army included Russians, Uzbeks, Ukrainians, Azerbaijanians, Byelo-Russians and Tartars

The women of the eastern republics of the Soviet Union went to the front together with men in the capacity of surgeons, nurses and medical orderlies. They bravely faced all the dangers of life at the front, tending the wounded often at the risk of their lives

Many soldiers of the western front have heard of the exploits of the fearless Tartar nurse, Asia Ilmatova. She volunteered for service at the front. In the very first battle she was faced with a hard task. Two seriously wounded men had to be taken to a place of safety under heavy fire, and their wounds had to be dressed. Asia crawled up to them, placed one on her great coat and dragged him into the cover; then she returned for the other man. Recently, she was asked to render aid to a wounded Soviet scout lying halfway between the Soviet and the enemy positions. Despite heavy

machinegun fire, she evacuated the wounded scout to the Soviet lines. That was the twentyeighth man she had saved in the battle. For the courage displayed by her in action, Asia Ilmatova was awarded a medal "for Valour."

Many of the participants in the heroic defence of Sevastopol remember the hill girl who carried the wounded off the field of action, and rendered them first aid. Her name is Roziyat Pashayeva. Before the war she was a student in the Daghestan Medical Institute. Today she is nurse in an advanced field dressing-station. Roziyat is a Tatar. The Tatars are one of the eighty nationalities inhabiting Daghestan. No wonder, the Arabs, when they conquered Daghestan in the XIII century, called it Djebelalsuni, meaning the "Mountain of languages." But the people of all the nationalities in Daghestan have found a common tongue in their struggle against the German Fascists.

The army surgeon, Abdusaid Isayev, also from Daghestan went to the front together with Roziyat Pashayeva. He was wounded while performing operations. He dressed his wounds himself and went on with his duties. In spite of terrible pain, he performed five more operations and died at his post. Roziyat is a brave girl of her people. Once she had to spend six hours on the ground unable to move or even raise her head. Not far from her lay the wounded man whose injuries she had to dress. She waited until the firing had quietened down, and then carried the man off the field of action. Roziyat was awarded the Order of "Red Star."

The Georgian girl Tamara Datuashvili, an army nurse fighting in the ranks of the marines on the Black Sea Coast, is well-known for her courage and fearlessness. Not long ago, a daring party of six marines dislodged the enemy from a

an height In the closing stage of the battle the young Jarenko, of the marine, was seriously wounded Tamara scrambled up a steep cliff under heavy enemy fire, and rendered aid to the wounded man.

The twenty-year-old Uzbek girl from Samarkand, Zeinab Zhanbekova is a nurse at a field hospital on one of the fronts in the Kalinin front Two years ago she finished her middle school, took the course of nurses and, when the war broke out, went at the front with her brother—a machinegunner.

If you could but see the happiness of the wounded soldiers in the field-hospital when they hear her soothing voice! The wounded forget their pain when the dark, little Zeinab comes down beside them and describes the native villages left behind, or when she sings songs which she had learnt in her childhood.

The women of the Soviet East fear no hardships, knowing fully that they are fighting for their homeland and for their right to a free life.

## CHAPTER V

# SOVIET UZBEKISTAN

### Introductory

The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, or Uzbekistan has an area of 410,000 square kilometres and a population of 6,278,000. Its capital is *Tashkent* with 585,000 inhabitants. It is situated in the heart of Soviet Central Asia and has a common border with Afghanistan. It lies on the foothills and lower slopes of Tian Shan and the Pamirs mountains and in extensive semi-desert plains of Kyzyl-Kum (Red Sands). It has large pasture lands and it is rich in coal, oil, sulphur, copper, cement and phosphorites.

Uzbekistan has for long been a cotton country, but in the Tsarist times, peasant growers were impoverished and farmed diminutive plantations, paying high rents for the use of land and water. Industry was confined to primitive ginning of raw cotton which was not worked up in the country itself.

There were very few schools in the country and those that there were taught in Russian. Only two or three per cent of the Uzbek population was literate. Uzbek women led a secluded life, they were given in marriage in childhood and brides were bought and sold.

Besides Uzbeks, who comprise three-quarters of the population, Uzbekistan is inhabited by Kara Kalpaks, Tajiks, Kazakhs and Russians.

In 1924 Uzbeks, for the first time in their history, joined their own state with the formation of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, a constituent Republic of the U S S R. With the establishment of Soviet rule the life and national economy of the Uzbeks completely changed.

Irrigated agriculture is carried on in Uzbekistan on a larger scale than anywhere else in the Soviet Union. In 1938 there were 2,800,000 hectares of arable land of which 500,000 hectares were irrigated. Since then irrigation has increased by leaps and bounds. In 1940 was built the grand Fergana Canal, 270 kilometres long, which irrigates 509,000 hectares of land, drawing its waters from the river Syr-Darya.

Sixty percent of the cotton crop of the Soviet Union is grown in Uzbekistan where plantations aggregate one million hectares and the crop (in 1938) exceeded 1,500,000 tons.

Besides cotton on irrigated land, are grown rice, oil-bearing and bast producing plants, sugarbeet, mulberry trees and grape vines. On unirrigated lands are sown wheat, barley and corn. Tractors and combine harvesters have given place to the primitive agricultural implements of the pre-Revolutionary times. Over 20,000 tractors are used to plough fields and more than 1500 combines to harvest grain and cotton.

The industries of Uzbekistan have similarly developed. They include modern cotton ginning and textile plants and silk mills. Uzbekistan produces large quantities of cottonseed and other vegetable oils, canned fruits and vegetables and wines. The value of the gross industrial output of the Republic in 1938 (1500 million rubles) was six times that of 1913.

The economic development was accompanied by cultural advancement. In 1939, 70 percent of the population was

literate and illiteracy is being altogether stamped out Education is universal and compulsory Primary schools are attended by 1,300,000 children ; there are 27 higher educational establishments (not a single one before the Revolution) more than one hundred technical colleges and over 3000 public libraries and clubs Over 200 newspapers are published—130 in Uzbek and the rest in the languages of the other nationalities in Uzbekistan. There are over 20 research institutes, stations and laboratories and the Uzbek branch of the Academy of Sciences has been formed National opera and ballet has been developed There are over 4 theatres The women of Uzbekistan are free and equal citizens, liberated from national and social oppression

## CHAPTER VI

## At the Foot of Mount Farkahad

By KHAMID ALIMDZHAN

*The Uzbek folk Poet*

[In Soviet Uzbekistan the construction of a dam across the river Syr Darya will make possible the irrigation of what is known as the hungry steppe. This year nine million cubic metres of earth are to be excavated and 140,000 cubic metres of concrete laid as well as of many kilometres of track. In the following story entitled "At the Foot of Mount Farkahad," the Uzbek poet Khamid Alimdzhani describes this gigantic undertaking in which 150,000 collective farmers are participating.]

A beautiful Uzbek legend of the arid Mirze-Chul Steppe, meaning the hungry steppe," has come down to us from the ancient times

The tales of the lovely girl Shirin, living in the heart of the hungry steppe, had been carried to all the corners of the earth, runs the legend. Knights and princes dreamed of making Shirin their own. Caravan after caravan brought to her suitors from far off lands. The rajah of India, the Chinese prince, Farkahad and the Iranian Shaikh Khosrou all came but Shirin repulsed them all. But, still, the knights and the guests from distant climes did not wish to accept Shirin's refusal. They were prepared for any test, any condition that she might set. Then Shirin said that he



who stems the flow of Syr Darya, who lets a canal and waters the hungry steppe would have her hand. He shall have my hand who makes the barren steppe land blossom forth," she said

The conditions were difficult and each undertook the task in his own way. The Iranian Shaikh Khosrou commanded his warriors to braid mats of shining reeds and, in a moonlit night, to lay these mats in the waves far into the steppe so that, in moonlight, they might glusten like canals carrying life-giving waters to the hungry steppe

Meanwhile Farkahad labored on, hurling down boulders from high mountain peaks in order that the path of Syr Darya might truly be barred. When Farkahad had already done much, Khosrou came to Shirin at night and, pointing to the mats lying in the waves in moonlight, said "Behold Shirin, the waters of Syr Darya glusten in the steppe-land!"

The noble-hearted Shirin did not notice the deception and replied, "I shall repay your love with love," and she became Khosrou's bride. But when the coming day drove the moon from the sky, the canal of "life giving waters" was gone, and over the steppes lay the deceptive mats of shining reeds

In her bitterness Shirin killed herself and news of her death was brought to Farkahad. His life now seemed empty to him, and he hurled his sharp sword high into the air and, as it descended, placed his head under its keen blade. So perished Farkahad too. The boulders on the river bank were reddened by the blood of the hero.

Thus perished Shirin ; thus perished Farkahad and

irrigated arid steppe land remained as of yore. It came to be known as the 'hungry steppe'. The mountain from which Farkahad had hurled down the boulders was called Mount Farkahad, and the spot where Shirin dwelt was named Valley of Shirin.

The Shirin Valley lies on the left bank of the river. Mount Farkahad towers over the right bank, separated by the invanquished waters of Syr Darya.

Now 150,000 men and women have come to this site to work. The Uzbek people decided to stem the flow of Syr Darya at the very point where Farkahad, the hero of ancient legend, had labored in days of yore.

Engineers of to-day confirm this spot as the most likely site for a huge dam which would bar the river's path. The tamed, life-giving waters of Syr Darya are to flow through the Valley of Shirin, rousing the 'Hungry Steppe' from its age-old slumber. Here peasants will sow cotton and rice, in the gardens they will plant orchards, apricot, peach and pomogranate and will plant the luscious grapes of their Central Asian homeland.

There, where the dam will rise, a powerful hydro-electric station will be built. Tension lines of high power will run through the Ferghana Valley to Tashkent and the station will furnish power for a metallurgical plant to be built at the base of Mount Farkahad ..

Powerful explosions shook the land. The salute of cannon and notes of eastern trumpets announced the beginning of excavation work.

People from all over the republic of Uzbekistan have come to the banks of Syr Darya—the collective farmers of the Ferghana Valley, famous builders of the Greater Fer-

ghana Canal, collective farmers from Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara have set up camp along the stretch of the future canal. Here too, are collective farmers from the distant Khoresm and Kara Kalpak who, in the absence of a railroad, had made their way to the site by plane. The task before them is a great one—over ten million cubic meters of earth must be excavated and about 300,000 cubic meters of stone and concrete laid.

One lakh fifty thousand people are digging a new canal on the left bank of the river and as far as I can see, the bright-hued robes form a motley forest swaying in the wind. All along the path of the future canal-bed, cooks are busily making native dishes of plov and shurpu in huge utensils which send out clouds of steam over the construction-site.

The sun is at its zenith, people sing, laugh and call to one another as they work. The names of the best workers are already known to all. Here is the brigade of Alim Egambordiyev—the young stalwart lad who has shouldered the tasks of several. It is with great difficulty that two people raise earth-filled sacks on to his shoulders, these sacks each weigh hundred kilograms. But he goes on doing his work seemingly unconscious of his burden. The engineer demands that a limit be set which Egambordiyev may not exceed but he only laughs and says, 'I cannot work within any limit. On the Greater Ferghana Canal I carried pebbles, in Northern Tashkent I made cuttings into the face of mountains and lifted slabs of stone, here I am digging a canal. The more I work the stronger I become.'

The old man working alongside Egambordiyev looks at him fondly and says, "he is like Farkahad who also knew no limit to his strength."

And so the best workers here have come to be known Farkahads. The collective farmers say that they have come here to complete that which Farkahad left undone, and the staff of the construction site has announced that the sections showing the best results will be the first to hear the opera Farkahad and Shirin."

*They say that when the work of building is over they will raise memorials to Farkahad and Shirin. On the right bank will stand the memorial of Farkahad, and on the left Shirin's memorial will be. Between them will rise a large monument to Stalin, for it is he who has united Farkahad and Shirin, fulfilling the dream of centuries.*

## CHAPTER VII

## Literature of Soviet Uzbekistan

*By* PYOTR SKOSYREV

Uzbekistan occupies a considerable part of the territory of Central Asia. For many centuries the ancient Uzbek people nurtured its civilisation, giving the world remarkable scientists, philosophers and poets. Famous to this day are the great astronomer Ulug-bek and Alisher Navoi, one of the finest of the eastern poets. Ulug-bek lived in the first half of the 15th century, while Navoi reached his height in the second half of the same century. The stellar tables compiled by the Samarqand astronomer retain their scientific significance to this day. Similarly, the verse of Navoi, who is called the father of Uzbek poetry, lives and attracts readers to-day. Most popular of his poems are "Farkhad and Shirin," a tale of the love of the stonemason Farkhad for the Armenian princess Shirin, and "Laili and Majnun," a moving tale of pristine love.

Throughout their history the Uzbeks have conducted many burdensome and bloody wars against people who tried to subjugate them. This circumstance, as well as the shifting of the world trade routes far to the west and south of Central Asia, slowed down the further development of the Uzbek people. With certain reservations it can be said that in Uzbekistan, as well as in the other countries of the Central Asia, the Middle Ages lasted several centuries longer than in the rest of the world.

In 1917 Uzbekistan entered the Soviet State as an equal

member of the family of free nations With that year begins the history of the new, modern culture of the Uzbeks The Soviet Government not only gave the Uzbek people political liberty but removed all hindrances to the development of their culture

The genius of the Uzbek people was fully revealed in the many-sided activity of Khamza-Khakim-Zade, poet, musician, novelist and playwright of the early years of the Revolution

Khamza effected a reform in Uzbek music, bringing it closer to the achievements of the great composers of Russia and other European countries He was the author of the first Uzbek dramas His play "Noble and Hired Laborer" is running in the theaters of Bokhara, Samarkand and Tashkent to this day, every young Uzbek dramatist makes use of the heritage of Khamza in his work In addition, Khamza was a prominent poet and public figure His role in the development of Soviet literature and the culture of Uzbekistan can be compared to that of such reformers in Russian art as the poet Mayakovsky and the composer Prokofiev

Khamza was murdered in 1930 by enemies of the people and of the Revolution However, his death could not stop the development of Soviet literature in Uzbekistan At the present time a number of talented novelists, poets and dramatists are living and working in that republic First among them is the splendid poet Gafur Gulyam, who several weeks ago was elected to the Uzbek Academy of Sciences Gafur Gulyam is still far from being an old man—he is in his forties—yet he has a big influence on the other writers of Uzbekistan Outstanding among his many poems are his fiery verses "You

Are Not an Orphan " and " Last Toast ". Gulyam's writing is linked with folk poetry, and that is why it is dear and understandable to every Uzbek, from professor to ordinary collective farmer

Another Uzbek writer, the novelist Aibek, has also been elected to the Academy. Aibek, from whose pen have come two large novels, " Sacred Blood " and " Navoi," an historical novel, is the founder of modern Uzbek prose. In addition, he writes film sceneries and is a specialist on the history of Uzbek literature. In cultural and creative scope Aibek ranks with the best European writers of today. He combines splendid knowledge of folklore and the history of his people with an understanding of the value of the rich literature of Russia and the other western peoples

The Uzbeks love the theatre, and in recent years, especially in wartime, the dramatists of Uzbekistan have written several splendid plays, among them " Mukana," a historical tragedy by K. Alimjan, and " Khamza " by A. Umara and K. Yashon

The best writers of Uzbekistan are producing works testifying to the whole world the joys of living in a free country, and filled with hatred for the enemy of mankind, Fascism. They express their determination to fight for their freedom and independence, together with the other peoples of the U.S.S.R. to their last drop of blood

## CHAPTER VIII

# Research Institutes And Education

*By WAHID WALI of Tashkent*

The Uzbek people have carried their language and culture through centuries of struggle and trial. It was only as a result of the victory of the October Revolution that the Uzbek people, one of the family of Soviet peoples, had a real opportunity to develop their culture and their science. Under zarism there was not a single college in Uzbekistan, while to-day there are 27 higher educational establishments, over 100 technical schools, 19 research institutes and 23 scientific institutions of various kinds.

The Uzbek higher schools have graduated a large number of specialists. In laboratories and institutes to-day research work is being conducted for the purpose of further developing the industry and agricultural of the country.

The rapid growth of research institutions led to the organization of a single scientific centre in the republic, the Uzbek Academy of Sciences.

There are Uzbek scholars working in every branch of knowledge, men of learning of whom the country is very proud.

Academician Musa Aibek is one of the leading literateurs of the country. He has 20 years of literary work behind him, has an excellent knowledge of modern and classical Uzbek poetry and is himself the author of a number of collections of



science

Since the war began many Uzbek scientific workers have given up their comfortable studies for a dug-out at the front to fight in defence of their country. Amongst the Uzbek scientists at the front are the mathematician Ikram Islamov who commands an A A battery and gained distinction during the defence of Moscow and Mirzahmet Mirsagatov, Master of Science, directs an important army hospital.

The research institutions and colleges of Uzbekistan have done much to ensure the great economic and cultural progress that has been made and of which the Uzbek Republic is justifiably proud.

## CHAPTER IX

# "History of the Peoples of Uzbekistan"

By VICTORIA ZVAGELSKAYA

In November 1941, a group of history scholars of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, began to work on a "History of the People of Uzbekistan" Their work is now completed and the two volumes, consisting of about four hundred pages will shortly come off the press The history is a scientific account of one of the most interesting peoples in Soviet Central Asia

This was the first attempt at a systematic exposition of the history of Uzbekistan, based on a careful study of original sources The first volume is devoted to the history of the peoples of Uzbekistan of ancient times up to and including the 6th century The second volume covers the period up to 1917 and ends with the February Revolution and subsequent events of August-September 1917

For the section "Ancient History" use was made of rich archaeological material including data on the latest archaeological excavations in Central Asia, mainly on the Tamak Tam Caves 1938 The history of ancient Uzbekistan 6th century shows the high level of culture of the peoples of Central Asia of those days The late feudal period of Uzbekistan 7th to 19th centuries is treated very fully The author of the two volumes made extensive use of manuscripts in the possession of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences Both volumes are profusely illustrated and are provided with ample bibliography The most important events that took place in the 18th and 19th centuries are listed in the Appendix

## CHAPTER X

# Uzbek Art

By KHADJI AKBAR GULYAMOV

*Head of the Arts Committee, the Uzbek S S R*

Three ancient cities of Samarkand, Ferghana and Kokand are situated in the beautiful valleys of Soviet Uzbekistan. Our republic stretches from the foothills of the snow-capped Tianshan to the sultry deserts of Karakalpakia as member of the great family of fraternal republics.

Uzbekistan had no professional theatres before the Revolution. Now forty theatres are running. 120 give productions in most varied genres. Some plays are staged by several theatres simultaneously. The republic's theatres include two opera houses, three dramatic theatres, three children's theatres, twelve collective farm theatres, several musical dramatic theatres etc. The majority plays in the Uzbek language but there are others performing in Russian, Uighur, Karakalpakian and other languages.

The cultural life of the republic was founded in Chimbai. In addition to Uzbek Philharmonic two more theatres in Uighur and Uzbek were opened in the city of Yangiul. In addition to the Uzbek Philharmonic in Tashkent, the Karakalpakian Philharmonic Society was founded in Chimbai. The circus company under the direction of seventy-eight year old tight-rope walker Tashkenabı Igamberdyev made hits in Moscow during its visit this summer.

During the war a new theatre with a seating capacity of one thousand was built in the district of old Tashkent; the Opera House now under construction will seat fifteen hundred people

Growth of theatrical and musical art of Uzbekistan was promoted by the close contact maintained by the theatres of this republic and the best theatres and workers in arts evacuated from Moscow, Leningrad and the Ukraine

The republic has six thousand and five hundred people working in various fields of art—among them Khalima Nasyrova, Tamara Khanum, Saira Ishanturayeva, Abrar Hidoyatov and Mukhtar Ashrafi—young composer who was awarded Stalin Prize for his heroic symphony written in war-time

Its culture is centuries old but its art developed only since the establishment of the Soviet power Writers, poets and composers created diversified national repertoire for opera, ballet drama and comedy by making a wide use of folk legends, folklore and the splendid literary heritage of Uzbek people

The professional stage welcomed the Uzbek women only after the Revolution

Uzbeks fighting courageously on the fronts of the Patriotic War inspired the playwrights to immortalise their valiant deeds in plays Many theatres of Uzbekistan are running the play "Kochkar Turdyev" which depicts how the Uzbek, Hero of the Soviet Union, alone broke into enemy trench, finished off Germans, seized their machinegun and blew up blockhouse with grenades The State Theatre of Opera and Ballet produced the patriotic musical drama called "Sword of Uzbekistan" which is about Uzbek fighting men who leave for the front and the active part of the Uzbek people in the Patriotic

## War

Many collective farm theatres are showing the play "Kurban Umarov" about Uzbek soldier captured by Germans who does not divulge army secrets despite the savage torture inflicted on him.

Represented in the Uzbek theatres are works by the classic dramatist Alexander Ostrovsky and war plays by contemporary playwrights, Leonid Leonov and Konstantine Simonov, Ushranian musical comedy "Zaporozhyc Cossack," "Beyond the Danube," "Natalka Poltavka", the Kazakh opera "Ertargyn" and others

Some of the best classic western European dramas are being performed in the Uzbek tongue Shakespeare's "Othello," "Romeo and Juliet," "Two Gentlemen of Verona." and comedies by Moliere. Recently the Uzbek Theatre of Opera and Ballet produced "Bizets Carmen" with Chalima Nasyrova in the lead

Collective framers and shepherds, cotton pickers and tractor drivers, young people from school room are filling the ranks of Uzbek actors. The actor Akhundov, foremost singer of the Yangiyul theatre, was only recently a tractor driver. The repertoire of this theatre which has existed for only a year and a half includes the heroic play "Kochkar Turdyev" the comedy "Knodja Nasredin" and the historical drama "Mukanna" which portrays the struggle of Uzbek people against foreign invaders in the eighth century. Yangiyul theatre conducts intensive work of training new actors. Its courses for further study and perfecting of histrionic art are attended by 250 aspiring actors. Twenty-four little violinists from five to eleven are being sent to music school for gifted children connected with the Leningard Conservatory

Hundreds of talented people are studying in twenty-three art schools of the republic, at national stage studios, opera and dramatic theatres and twelve music schools

Uzbekistan has a conservatory and theatre institute just opened in Tashkent. The institute accepts not only the Uzbek youth but also talented young people of other republics in Central Asia.

Uzbek actors draw large audiences in towns and collective farms, mountains and valleys. The cotton-pickers have pledged their word to Marshal Stalin to increase cotton yield this year, actors entertaining them will stimulate the fulfilment of this pledge. In May 1944 alone musical companies gave over a thousand concerts right on the field for them.

In the three war years the Uzbek actors gave three thousand and five hundred concerts on the fronts of the Patriotic War, over ten thousand performances for the wounded in hospitals and fifteen thousand for army units.

The theatres of Tashkent, Samarkand, Andijan and Namangan are packed with thousands of spectators. In Nukus and Kokand actors perform to tens of thousands of collective farmers in field camps and construction sites of new canals. Workers and collective farmers are inspired to work with tenfold energy after performance and actors feel amply rewarded and stimulated by the warm response of the audience.

## CHAPTER XI

# My Life in Peacetime and War

By SARRA ISHANTURAYEVA

*People's Actress of Uzbekistan*

Picture to yourself a girl with black eyes and dark hair worn in many little braids in Uzbek fashion always shabby and tomboyish That is a description of myself as I looked in my childhood when I lived in a little village with the poetic name of "Besh Bulak" Five Springs

My father, who has no land and whose health was undermined by the exhausting toil of a farm labourer, died when I was less than a year old My mother was a sick woman and could not feed her three children, and so she gave us to strangers to be brought up and they took us out of pity

I was given a home by a poor village shepherd and his wife They were childless and, as Uzbeks say, "a family without children is a garden without birds" They fed me from the little they had and were as tender and loving as any parents could have been My adoptive father has died recently to my great grief, but my adoptive mother is still alive and I do my best to take care of her and comfort her in her old age I do not remember my mother because she died when I was young and my adoptive parents soon went to live in another village

When I was twelve we went to live in Tashkent and I was sent to school At that time people had overthrown the Tsarist Government and set up the Soviet Power All Uzbek

children, girls as well as boys were given opportunities to study. There was a dramatic circle in my school and in it, I first became interested in the dramatic part which was to be one meaning of my whole life.

I do not remember the name of the first play I acted in, but I do remember that I acted the part of an orphan one that I knew very well.

When I had grown a little older I was sent to Moscow together with a group of Uzbek youngsters to study at the government's expense. I spent several years in the capital, and, during my stay, became thoroughly acquainted with the great Russian dramatic art. Every play I saw in the theatres of the capital, whether it was in the First Art or in the Maly or in some other theatre, was a revelation. I returned to Uzbekistan enriched by my experiences and knowledge and began to act in the Uzbek State Theatre of Drama which had been set up. For the past fifteen years I have been acting in the same theatre.

When I was in Moscow I made the acquaintance of Abrar Khidoyatov, now People's Actor of the Uzbek S S R. At the time he was also a student at the theatre studio. He afterwards became my husband and we are working together. Our lives have become one, not only at home but on the stage as well.

The greatest part I ever acted was that of Ophelia, the first time being in 1935. It was the first of Shakespeare's works to be translated into Uzbek and the performance was a huge success. It ran for 27 days straight after the premiere, playing to a full house every night. To this day "Hamlet" played frequently and invariably draws a full house.

It has given me the greatest pleasure as well to act parts in our national plays and in Russian classics, also Soviet plays.



I received particularly deep satisfaction from my work on the role of Katerina in Ostrovsky's "Storm." I felt that I was growing constantly in my art, and, just before the war, I undertook to play Desdemona with my husband playing Othello

My Soviet fatherland has enabled me to come up from a simple peasant girl and orphan to be an actress with a whole world of culture at my command. The Soviet Government has conferred two orders and a medal on me for my work. I am horrified when I think that, if it were not for the October Revolution, I should have led the same dull, grey life that was the lot of my mother and elder sister under the Tsarist regime, that I should have been doomed to lifelong imprisonment in the "Ichkari" women's half of the house.

German fascism attempted to deprive all Soviet women, Uzbek women included, of all that we have attained during years of the Soviet Power. That is why, when the war broke out, I immediately turned my art into a weapon against Hitler Germany, and, together with my people, live with but one idea and aim to accomplish the downfall of Hitlerism in the shortest time possible

I attempted to create on the stage images of those true daughters of the Uzbek people who helped their husbands and brothers to fight for their freedom against the invaders. Among these roles are those of Sultan Begum, sister of our popular hero, Jalal-ud-din, who inflicted severe defeat on Jenghis Khan in the 13th century and the role of Gul O'ryn, mate of Mukanna, leader of the people of Central Asia in their uprising against foreign conquerors in the 8th century.

I give frequent performances for wounded officers and

men in hospitals, and the thought that these performances bring me nearer to the defenders of our country is a source of deep satisfaction to me as their praise is a source of new creative strength

In addition to my work on the stage, I have numerous duties as Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek S.S.R.

I have two sons, Tima and Goga. The first is in 4th class at school and his elder brother is in the 6th. Both boys dream of the day when they can prove themselves worthy and useful sons of their people.

## CHAPTER XII

# Khalima Nasyrovi the Nightingale of Uzbekistan

By STANISLAV RADZINSKY

Uzbek art springs from the midst of the people. Uzbek poetry, singing and music is an inseparable part of the life of the people. Uzbekistan is proud of its best artists. Their names are well-known in the more distant kishlaks (villages) and they form the subject of tales and stories. Perhaps the most popular artist of Uzbekistan is the primadonna Khalima Vasyrova.

Her masterly singing and inspired talent, has earned for Nasyrova the highest title of a Soviet artiste—People's Artist of the U S S R, which the Soviet government bestowed on her when she was still quite a young singer. She also received a Stalin Prize. In her native land she is affectionately and expressively called - "Our nightingale."

The singing of Khalima Nasyrova charms one by its sincerity, its lyricism and mastership of her vocal gifts. The inborn musical faculties that distinguish the Uzbek people have been developed artistically to a remarkable degree in the school of Russian masters of singing. Russian art has assisted the training of Uzbek national singers.

Khalima Nasyrova springs from an Uzbek peasant family. Her childhood passed in a village near the town of Kokhand. Her father died at an early age and it was hard for her mother

to bring up the three children that were left on her hands. She decided to place Khalima in a children's home where Uzbek children were brought up together with Russian ones. That was in the first years of Soviet Power in Uzbekistan.

In the children's home Khalima's dramatic abilities were noticed. At that time a studio was formed in Baku in which dramatics was taught to gifted Caucasian children. As there was no such studio in Uzbekistan in those years the girl was sent to Baku. She made remarkable progress in the studio and in 1927, then still quite young, she came home on leave. In those times there were few Uzbek actresses and efforts were made to induce her to enter the theatre in Samarkand. She refused and demanded to be given an opportunity of completing the course in the Baku studio. An appeal was made to her sense of duty, pointing out to her that she ought to help the Uzbek Theatre in its difficult path. This argument had the necessary effect and Khalima agreed to go to Samarkand.

In the main the Uzbek Theatre is synthetic and vocal numbers form part of many Uzbek dramas and comedies. In this way Khalima's voice attracted attention and she was transferred to the opera. In 1934 she was sent to Moscow to finish her musical education. In the Soviet capital she studied for almost two years. In 1937 she appeared in the capacity of prima donna of the Uzbek Opera Theatre at the Festival of Uzbek Art in Moscow. She was hailed with enthusiasm by the critics and musical world of the capital.

Construction of the great canals and huge hydro-electric power stations are conducted by methods under which masses of the people participate in such jobs. From town and countryside thousands of people come out to work on such constructions. Work under the flaming sun is often very trying. Khalima Nasyrova frequently visits these constructions to per-

form before the workers. In honour of this national singer the udarniks—shock-workers—of these jobs set their records of labor.

Recently Khalima Nasyrova toured Moscow together with other Uzbek artists. Her first appearance was in the Writers Club Her success was immense. And it is not surprising, for this Uzbek singer is indeed a wonderful artiste

## CHAPTER XIII

**Mukhtar Ashrafi, the Uzbek Composer***By VASSILY KRAINEV*

A few days ago the young Uzbek composer, Mukhtar Ashrafi, gave a concert of his own works in Tashkent, the capital of Soviet Uzbekistan

Ashrafi is 31 years but looks considerably younger. He was born in the ancient town of Bokhara in the family of a singer. He displayed a talent for music in his early childhood, and at the age of seven played on the national instruments. At twelve he entered the Bokhara Musical School where he spent four years and afterwards completed his musical education in the Samarkand Musical Institute. On graduation from the Institute, Ashrafi was appointed Manager of the Musical Department and the leading conductor of Uzbek Musical Theatre, four years later he went to Moscow to improve his technical knowledge and perfect himself in the art of writing music. For four years he worked under the direction of one of the leading Moscow specialists, Doctor Sergei Vassilenko.

Ashrafi has written a number of musical works of great significance to the musical culture of Uzbekistan.

He has been twice decorated by the Soviet Government—once with badge of merit for his work in connection with Uzbek musical festival in Moscow in 1937, and then with order of Red Banner for his work in organising and conducting musical entertainment for the builders of the great Ferghana in 1939.

He was given the title of People's Artist of Uzbekistan by the Uzbek Government in 1939 for first Uzbek national opera, "Buran" which he wrote in collaboration with his teacher, Doctor Vassilenko

In collaboration with other Uzbek composers, playwrights and poets, Mukhtar Ashrafi has written a number of musical dramas depicting on the stage the struggle against the Fascist barbarians by the heroes of the Soviet people and patriots of the great country. These musical dramas are now firmly established in the repertoires of the Uzbek national Theatre

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the October Revolution Ashrafi wrote a heroic symphony dedicated to the Anniversary and to the heroes of the patriotic war. The symphony consists of three movements: the first is the dramatic movement depicting the preparedness of the Soviet people for war; the second is the lyrical movement tracing the spiritual wealth of the heroic people; and the third and the final movement depicts the triumphant mood of people over future defeat of their hated enemy.

"I am a composer and I am an Uzbek and I belong to the people which had no monumental forms of musical art prior to the October Revolution. The party of Lenin and Stalin and the brotherly help of the great Russian people have raised my country and my people to great cultural and economic heights. From the bottom of my heart I thank Great Stalin, the Bolshevik party and the Soviet Government. The award of the Stalin Prize for my work is to me a great inspiration to the creation of fresh musical compositions and to increase my efforts to raise still higher the musical culture of the Uzbek people. All my strength and abilities and all my

love I am glad to devote to my country, my people and to great Stalin in order to justify the title of Stalin prize-winner ”

Mukhtar Ashrafi on receiving his Stalin Prize donated the whole sum to the fund for the construction of an Airforce Squadron and tank



## CHAPTER XIV

**Hamza, the Uzbek Giant of Literature.***By* PETER SKOSYREV

The author of this article had occasion, twenty-five years ago, to spend some months in Old Bokhara, the capital of what was then known as the Bokhara People's Republic. In those days the First Uzbek National Theatre from Tashkent was visiting the city. It was a new theatre founded just the year before by that remarkable Uzbek writer, musician and producer, Hamza-Hakim-Zade Niazı

Now regarded as the oldest of the Uzbekistan theatres, it bears the name of its founder, whose plays may be seen here so often as those of other Uzbek dramatists

Hamza, to give him the name he was called by in his life-time, is one of the most interesting and outstanding figures in the multi-national culture of the Soviet state. His activities were manysided. For some years before the Revolution he was known as a writer of prose, who advocated in his novels radical changes in the educational system of the old Uzbek schools. At that time he thought that school reforms would bring about the rapid organization of Uzbek life, which was then stagnant and unprogressive.

But the events of 1917 convinced the young educationalist that school-reforms, though an important public measure, were not in themselves sufficient, and he understood that the best method of fighting for culture was to give wholehearted support to the young Soviet system in all that it undertook.

His conception was to bring reform into all aspects of Uzbek art and through them exercise an influence on his fellow countrymen's development. He knew well their love of music, songs, shows and games.

So Hamza wrote songs in which he treated stagnation and ignorance to slashing criticism. And he himself wrote the music to these songs. You may hear them sung still in the country villages and Uzbeks still find the charm of freshness in them. They are published in two volumes called "The White Rose," and "The Red Rose."

Not content with writing songs, Hamza began work on the first Uzbek opera. He was both author and composer. Every young composer of Uzbekistan sees in Hamza a teacher, an example and until now they follow his counsel. They turn frequently for inspiration to folk-music themes but bear in mind that the composer's purpose is to lead national culture ahead and not lag behind it.

As founder of the First Uzbek Theatre Hamza's work has yielded splendid results. He gathered talented young people about him, trained them, made excellent actors out of them and toured the most distant parts of the republic with them. He had faith in the theatre as a great educational force. He wrote plays for it, produced them himself, and acted the leading roles.

Many of these plays have never left the stage of the Tashkent, Samarkand, Andijan and Bokhara theatres for 25 years. These include the comedy "The Bai and the Farm Labourer," "What Maisari Did," a satire "The Old Elections" "Holhison" and others."

The main theme of the plays is the struggle of darkness and light, good and evil, the new and the out-of-date.

In each of them the plot is well-constructed, the characters vividly drawn, the dialogue witty and lively.

The writer was greatly loved by his fellow countrymen, who are proud of him, as every nation which emerges on the wide historical arena is proud of its representatives who have been active in bringing them enlightenment and have created works of art of outstanding merit

Hamza met his death 15 years ago at the hands of those who stood out for the old forms of social life against which he had waged war. But if a man is truly great his death does not mean that he is forgotten. Hamza-Hakim-Zada Niazi, playwright, poet, novelist, composer, producer and patriot of free Uzbekistan survives to-day for every Uzbek in those new works of art that are being created to-day by his pupils, the young generation of novelists, composers and poets of free, happy, Soviet Uzbekistan

## CHAPTER XV

# The Bakhshi-Uzbek Story Tellers

By HADI ZARIFOV

*Director of the Institute of Language and Literature, Uzbek Academy  
of Sciences*

(The author of this article is a well-known Uzbek specialist in folklore who has recorded over 125,000 lines of the unwritten folklore of the Uzbek people)

No festival or ceremony, be it town or village, anywhere in Uzbekistan would be complete without the Bakhshi, the bards who sing epic poems and legends. The Bakhshi is not only a story-teller, he is a singer, musician and poet. He still sings the verses compiled by the people and handed down through the centuries but at the same time he composes new songs adding to the treasure house of Uzbek folklore. The Bakhshi travel from village to village, from town to town. The people always receive them, everywhere they are welcome.

The chief form of song sung by the Bakhshi is the Dastan, a lengthy epic poem which may contain 8,000 to 10,000 verses, some of them even have as many as 20,000 lines with the addition of prose inserts. The authors of the Dastans are not known, the poems were compiled by the people themselves. They have been handed down by word of mouth through many generations, constantly had new stanzas added to them, took new forms, gradually became more finished and refined.

In pre-revolutionary days Uzbek folklore was not studied at all. Some scholars, both Russian and West European, even

denied the existence of an Uzbek folklore, believing it had long ceased to exist under the influence of town culture and a written classical literature. The Uzbek Dastans were also unknown for they were preserved only in the memories of the Bakhshī. Thanks only to the Bakhshī has this folklore been handed down to us and the wealth of oral literary creation saved.

We have now written down about 80 Dastans many of which date back to a very early period. There are some amongst them which for profundity of content and rich poetic qualities are the equals of the leading epics of the ancient and medieval world.

The contents of almost all the Dastans are closely connected with historic events in the life of the Uzbek and other peoples of Central Asia. One of the most popular Dastans amongst the Uzbek people, and one that is always in the repertoire of the Bakhshī, is "Kun Batyr" (Sun-knight). It tells of the struggle of the beautiful Turanian queen Oi-Suluv against the menacing Persian general Kaisar, a struggle in which Oi-Suluv gained victory. It is an interesting fact that the subject of this Dastan coincides with Herodotus' story of a war in the Sixth Century B.C. between the Massagets, a tribe of Central Asiatic nomads, under the leadership of a queen Tomiris and the Persian king Kyros.

The Dastan, "The Siege of Chambil," tells of events connected with the Arab conquest of Central Asia in the Seventh Century A.D.

One of the finest of the Dastans is "Alpamysh." Its subject is the struggle of the Uzbek people for their independence in the Sixteenth Century. This Dastan, like many others, is heard in several variants in the repertoires of different Bakhshī. We have also recorded the Dastan "Sheibanī Khan."

## THE BAKSHI-UZBEK STORY TELLERS

which is especially interesting on account of its telling the story, in poetic form, of the struggle of Sheibani Khan who founded a new dynasty in Samarkand to replace the Timurid dynasty

The Bakhshi do not only sing epic songs Their repertoires also contain lyrics and love songs

In the West we have folk songs and poems that have become fixed once and for all in a definite form, whereas in Uzbekistan we see a constant development of folklore and the appearance of more and more fresh poetic works composed orally by the people The process of compiling new songs and poems has received a fresh impetus in these heroic days when the Uzbek people, like all the peoples of the Soviet Union, are fighting against Hitler Germany, defending their liberty and independence Since the war began the repertoires of the Bakhshi, as a recent recording shows, have been enriched by many new works praising the deeds of the Uzbek and other brother peoples on the battlefield

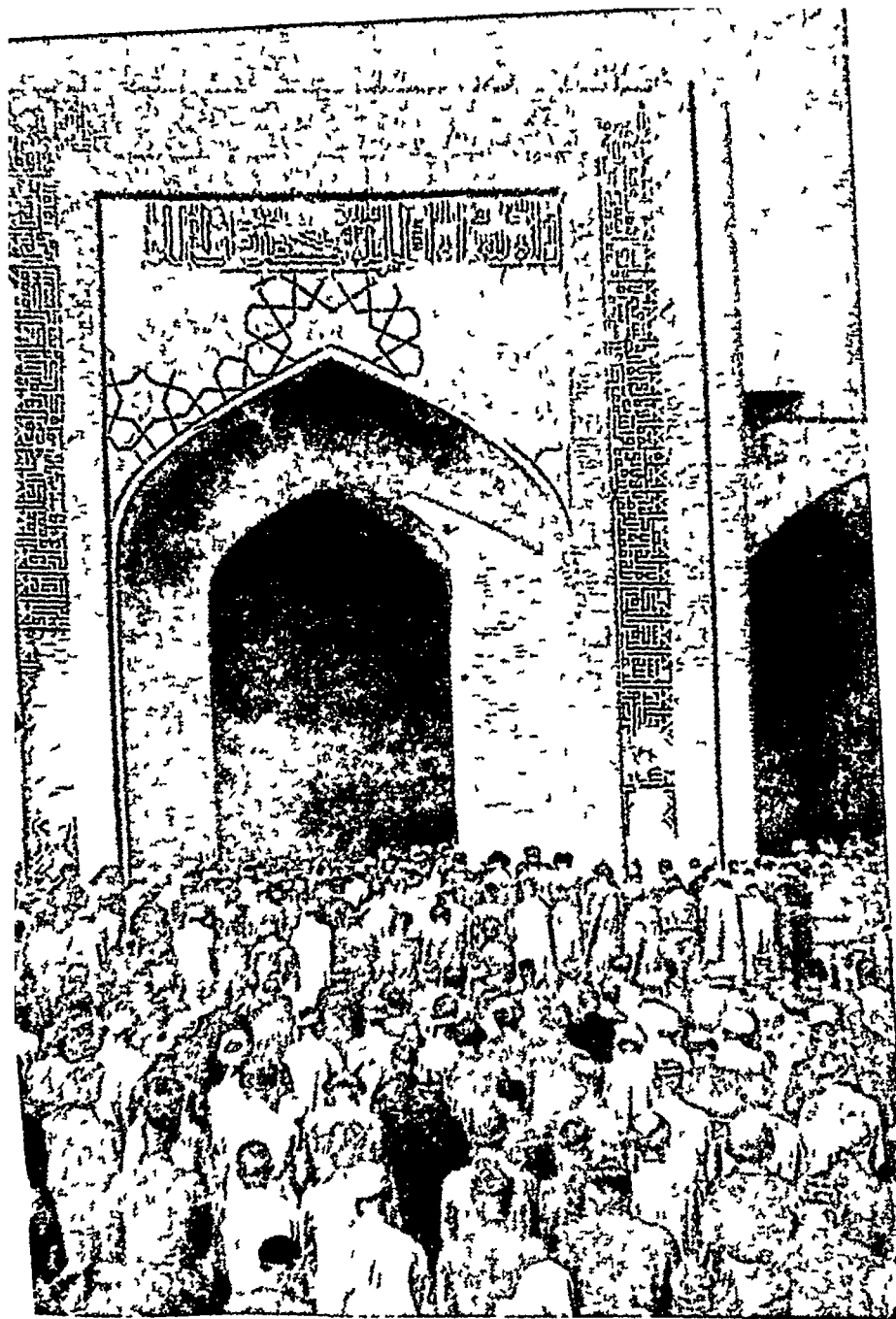
The Bakhshi sing their songs to the accompaniment of the dombra, a two-stringed instrument from which the Bakhshi will never part

Before a Bakhshi can be acknowledged as such he has to go through a long schooling. Old Bakhshi who wander through the towns and villages usually select disciples from amongst the more talented youth For three or four years the novices learn the Dastans from the mouth of the master When the disciple has learned a few Dastans the master tests him in the presence of a large audience, usually consisting of the old men of the village in which they are staying at the time It is as though the young aspirant is publicly defending a thesis for which he will receive the title of Bakhshi, one greatly honoured

by the Uzbek people. Only after this does the young Bakhshi begin to make independent appearances. Some of the more famous Bakhshi have taught ten or twelve pupils.

In Uzbekistan several independent schools of Bakhshi have grown up each with its own style and peculiarities. The centre of one of these schools is the village of Davup, some 30 kilometres from Samarkand. Very famous is the Bulungur school with its centre at the village of Kyrk in Bulungur District. The repertoires of the Bakhshi of this school are filled with songs of heroism, patriotism, profound faith in the strength of man and in the triumph of the ideals of progress over the dark forces of reaction and obscurantism.

The Soviet Government gives every support to the Bakhshi whose art was falling into decay in Tsarist times. The repertoires of the Bakhshi are being recorded and published, some of the poems of the Bakhshi have been translated into Russian. Many Bakhshi have been granted a life pension by the Soviet Government, and a large number have been invited to work in various state theatres.



After prayers in the Great Mosque in Bukhara Uzbekistan





## CHAPTER XVI

# Women of Soviet Uzbekistan in war and peace

By FATIMA YULDASHBAYEVA

*Member of the Presidium, the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek Soviet Republic.*

Annals and legends of the Uzbek people keep fresh the memory of many of their daughters whose names have become immortal as fighters for the liberty and independence of their country. Even today our people sing praises of Queen of Suluv who headed her troops and defeated the enemy when the country was attacked by the Persian conqueror King Cyrus.

For many generations mothers handed on to their daughters the story of Yunus Peri who, at the end of the eleventh century, raised the banner of revolt among women against the foreign conquerors. Songs were composed about the heroine Barchioni who did same thing several centuries later.

Throughout many centuries of history of the Uzbek people their women always fought shoulder to shoulder with their fathers, husbands and brothers in times when the country was in danger. In our days when German Fascism made an attempt to deprive the Uzbek people together with Soviet people of their liberty and independence, women of Uzbekistan revived and increased the glorious traditions of their mothers and have given these traditions new content resulting from radical changes in the position of Uzbek women that have occurred during years of the Soviet power, the growth of their social and political consciousness and improvement in their culture.

Under the rule of the Khans and Beks there was no creature in existence with less rights than the Uzbek women. Years under Tsarism did not bring any changes. The Uzbek women were doomed to lifelong slavery at first in the home of their father and then in the "ichkari" women's quarters in their husband's house. The man usually bought his wife from her parents the moment she was twelve or thirteen years old. There was no education for Uzbek women and less than one per cent of them could read and write. Uzbek women could not play any active part in political or social life.

The present situation is quite different. The Stalin Constitution guarantees equal rights to all men and women of all nationalities. The rights of Uzbek women are outlined in Article 121 of the Constitution of the Uzbek Soviet Republic. "Women in the Uzbek S S R have equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life. The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education and by state protection of interest of the mother and child, prematurity and maternity leave with full pay and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens."

The Uzbek women now take an active part in building up their country. Amongst the Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek Soviet Republic there are ninety-two women. Women of Uzbekistan also take part in deciding issues of importance to the whole Soviet Union; amongst their Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the U S S R., the Uzbek people elected thirteen women.

Uzbek women have opened to them the highest posts in state and economic bodies. One of the Vice Chairmen of the

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## WOMEN OF SOVIET UZBEKISTAN IN WAR AND PEACE 67

residium, the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek Republic is a woman, Pasha Mahmudova by name, former collective farmer from Khoresm

Thousands of chairmen and vice chairmen of the regional city and village soviets and collective farms are women, here are also women in leading positions in various economic and co-operative bodies and industrial enterprises

The road to knowledge and culture is open to our women. In both urban and rural districts girls constitute a half of the total number of elementary and secondary school pupils. Many Uzbek women graduate from higher educational establishments and become engineers, teachers, builders, doctors, scientific workers. There are Uzbek women writers, artists, actresses and singers

Onakhon Tishabayeva, Master of Science, is lecturer at the Tashkent Medical Institute. Muharram Arifkhanova, also Master of Science, lectures on physiology of plants at the Central Asian State University. One of the engineers at the Stalin Textile Combine in Tashkent is Mahbuba Muhamedova. Works of two women writers, Oidin and Zulfia, are very popular in Uzbekistan. Halima Nasyrova, Uzbek nightingale, Stalin Prize Winner, is popular on the stage of Moscow and other large Soviet cities as she is in her native Uzbekistan.

In order to make it easier for Uzbek women to participate in political, industrial and cultural life and to help them to bring up healthy and strong children, an extensive network of institutes for health protection of mothers and children has been set up, no such institutions existed in Tsarist times. To-day the republic has 1,764 permanent nurseries with accommodation for 58,800 children and 6,596 collective farm nurseries with accommodation for 161,875 which are open during the farming

season. There are maternity homes, outpatients clinics and women's and children's welfare centres in both towns and rural districts; there are also milk distribution points and special children's sanatoria. The state maintains hundreds of medical specialists who give free medical attention to women and children.

Our government has spent millions of rubles to assist expectant mothers. Many Uzbek women have received the highly respected title of Mother Heroine and have been awarded the "Order of Glory of Motherhood" and Motherhood Medal.

When Fascist Germany attacked the U.S.S.R., Uzbek women were unanimous in their efforts in defence of their country and the rights which the October Revolution of 1917 had given them.

Soon as the war broke out, tens of thousands of Uzbek women went to factories on their own initiative in order to work in place of men who had gone to the front and help supply needs of army. Before the war a majority of these women were housewives who had no special trade or qualifications. They are working as milling machinists, tool makers, turners, welders, roofers, moulders and in many other trades that were formerly followed exclusively by men.

Here is a typical example taken from among many similar ones. Faizi Suleimnova was a housewife who, at the beginning of the war, went to work in one of the largest defence factories in Tashkent. She is now a master tool-setter, a trade which requires a very high degree of skill and knowledge. One of the results of her fine work is that workers in the section under her control systematically overfulfil the programme set for them.

## WOMEN OF SOVIET UZBEKISTAN IN WAR 69 AND PEACE

Take another example Hadicha Saidhojayeve was one of the first textile mill workers to undertake the task of mending the double number of machines required by the normal standards Her example was followed by a number of other women workers and the productivity of their labour was greatly increased Hadicha has now been promoted to be inspector in the factory

Uzbek women are an important factor in war-time farming The cultivated area of the republic has been increased by hundreds of thousands of acres since the war began, this was made possible only by the splendid work done by Uzbek women on fields Women of collective farms, like those working in industry, are not doing ordinary rank and file work but have also become skilled workers following many different professions, we have Uzbek women tractor drivers, mechanics and combine operators

One of the initiators of the nationwide campaign for greater cotton output which began in Uzbekistan last year was Tajikhon Askarova, Uzbek woman deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U S S R and a leading worker on the Stalin Collective Farm in the Namangan district, Ferghana valley Another popular name in our republic is that of Zamira Mutalova of the Ilyich Collective Farm in the Tashkent region who last year obtained a record harvest of an average of 97 tons per hectare on five hectares cultivated by her group workers

Uzbek women have not confined themselves to working in industry and agriculture as their bit towards the war effort They have volunteered for service at the front Hibakhon Gantuyeva, girl sniper from Andijan, earned fame on the Lenin-grad Front where she killed dozens of the enemy

## CHAPTER XVII

### Sabir Umar

### The First Uzbek General

By, I LIUBANSKY

During childhood he herded cattle Sabir Umar, Ogly Rahimov's father had been poor and had worked all his life for others. During the last years of his life Sabir's father had spent labouring at the mill belonging to Bai in Tashkent The would-be general was five years old when his father died defeated by poverty. The widow was left with tiny children How much of sorrow and contempt the poor woman had to bear till her eldest son began to grow up ! When he was twelve, Sabir following in his father's footsteps, herded the cattle of a rich fellow-villager At day break he drove the cattle out to pasture accompanied by a faithful dog Occasionally, cavalcades of soldiers, gleaming with gold braid, passed close by him along the main road The swarthy boy stood with a whip in his hand his eyes glistening with excitement How could he, this child of fields, have dreamt that in 28 years he would be wearing a general's insignia and would lead thousands of soldiers into battle ?

In 1918 his mother died. The boy was sent to a children's home but two years later he joined the Red Army as a volunteer He was sent to the army school in Baku It was here that his character was formed he became a Red Army Commander—army, it seemed then, was his real vocation Rahimov showed his brilliance as a military leader in fighting

against Hojamnula's gangs of Basmaches For six years Rahimov fought against the Basmaches who threatened the freedom of the peoples of Central Asia He was awarded the Order of Red Star for his gallantry.

When the patriotic war broke out, Rahimov was in Tashkent He was directing military training in air and the Chemical Defence League He was a good worker and had succeeded in training thousands of young men prior to their joining the ranks of the Red Army As soon as the war began he left for the front at the head of his unit It will soon be two years that Sabir Rahimov has been at the front.

His experience in fighting against Basmaches did him a good service as did also his knowledge as an experienced cavalryman and gunner. During this war Rahimov has displayed all his talents as a commander. In February, 1943, he was awarded the order of Suvorov Second Class for his brilliant leadership In March of this year he was appointed Major General

Sabir Rahimov is the first Uzbek general Uzbekistan is proud of her heroic sons In the ranks of the splendid staff of generals created by Stalin is the Uzbek Sabir Rahimov, an embodiment of the basis of Soviet society—unity of all peoples in the U S S R which has become even stronger in their struggle against the Hitlerite bandits and hordes



## CHAPTER XVIII

### More Light on Sabir

*By*, MIKHAIL DELGOPOLOV

I met Major General Rahimov in his home on the outskirts of Tashkent where he had gone straight from the front on leave to see his family and friends. Tall, spare and with an olive-skinned face General Rahimov showed me through the small house where he had spent his childhood. "Here I was brought up and it is hard to say what I would have been now if the Soviet government had not given me opportunity to obtain education and become a Red Army general," said he. Major General Rahimov's breast was decorated with two Orders of the Red Banner, Order of Red Star and Order of Suvorov Second Class. He earned the Order of Red Star fighting bandits in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan in 1925. When the Nazis treacherously attacked the Soviet Union Rahimov was commanding a regiment in Turkmenistan. He went to the front at the head of his regiment and bravely, staunchly fought the Germans at Yelnya where he destroyed 27 enemy tanks and repulsed numerous fierce attacks. At Yelnya I was defending Moscow, the heart of my motherland," the Major General said.

"Simultaneously, I was defending my native Uzbekistan. In my regiment were Russians, Ukrainians, Byelo-Russians, Uzbeks and I treasured them all equally. I insisted on the strictest discipline, but my men were fond of me and were

ready to die rather than retreat." Already in August 1941 Capt. Colonel Sabir Rahimov was wounded in his breast and arm. He was brought by plane to Zheleznovodsk. Barely recovering from his wounds, he returned to army in action on the southern front. In November, 1941, he was promoted to the rank of colonel. He was assigned difficult and responsible tasks which he performed with credit. His regiment forced its way into the river Don, and, following hard on the enemy's heels, burst into Rostov. In these battles Rahimov's troops captured 200 loaded trucks, large quantity of military equipment and other booty. For this brilliant operation he was awarded the Order of Red Banner. His regiment was transferred to Donbas where it was engaged in bitter and stubborn fighting with enemy who was numerically superior. Colonel Rahimov was first appointed second in command and then the commander of the division composed of the Donbas miners with which he fought many actions working havoc on the Germans. His division was later transferred to the Northern Caucasus and had to defend the important strategical sector of Shaumyan—Tuapse. In an unequal fight against a strong and treacherous enemy, Rahimov's division annihilated about 8,000 Nazis without yielding an inch of ground. It was for this operation that he received the second Order of Red Banner. On January 25th, 1943, Rahimov's division broke through the enemy's defences and penetrated into his rear. Germans crumbled under the assault and fled in panic, towards Krasnodar.

The division captured ninety artillery pieces, thirty tractors, 250 loaded trucks, twelve munition dumps and six food dumps. Rahimov's troops were among the first to enter Krasnodar. With his men Rahimov shared all the hardships of the campaign—hardships to be found in crucial sectors of

battle where the fate of operations is being decided. In February, 1943, the government awarded him the Order of Suvorov Second Class. Colonel Rahimov received the following letter from Moscow. "Being unable personally to present you with the order of Suvorov Second Class, conferred on you by the Ukase of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R. of the February eighth, 1943, I send it you together with this letter. I congratulate you on this deserved award and wish you further success in your military career and personal life. Mikhail Kalinin, President, Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U S S R." Soon after this Rahimov was promoted to the rank of Major General Sabir Rahimov spoke with pride of Uzbekistan, of the great Russian nation, of men and commanders of the multi-national Soviet Union fighting for the welfare and prosperity of their country. "Thus from Tashkent, where I am to see my wife, Magra, and five-year-old son Alim whom I have not seen for nearly two years. Within a few days I shall be returning to the army in action to whatever sector I may be assigned by the supreme commander and marshal of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin I shall fight the Nazis in defence of my great country until complete victory and the ejection of the enemy from our land "

## CHAPTER XIX

# Kazakhstan Follows Lenin's Behest

By ABSAMENT KAZAKPAYEV

*(President of Supreme Soviet, the Kazakh Soviet Republic)*

The long path traversed by the Kazakh people during years of the Soviet power and the tremendous successes that have been achieved in the strengthening of the Kazakh state and in the development of economy and culture are indivisibly bound up with names of Vladimir Lenin and the great continuer of his work Joseph Stalin

Lenin was the founder of the Soviet State. His name is pronounced with gratitude and affection by all peoples of our Union. In the folklore of the Kazakh republic mirror of thoughts and hopes of the people, Lenin is represented as a *batyr* (Titan), the liberator who brought liberty and happiness to the Kazakhs. In Lenin's ideas people saw the way to national renaissance. Every year was a step forward in realising these ideas, a further proof of their vitality.

The main principle of the national policy of the Soviet Union formulated by Lenin before the October Socialist Revolution is the right of all nations to self-determination, including the right to secession from the union and the formation of separate states. It is a well-known fact that, before the October Revolution, Kazakhstan was one of the most backward colonies of Russia. The national economy consisted of animal husbandry and primitive agriculture. The national culture of the Kazakhs was persecuted by Tsarism. The people were without any rights, were oppressed and poverty-stricken.

Naturally, the first decrees published by Lenin under the Soviet power—decrees on land, declaration of rights of peoples of Russia and others, aroused great enthusiasm amongst the Kazakhs. I would even say that, for the first time in their long history, the suffering Kazakhs felt that they were really a people when they heard Lenin's warm-hearted words. Lenin's words aroused in them feelings of human dignity and like a torch lighted their way to the great heights of the happiness which have been reached in a quarter of century of persistent labour.

Immediately after the establishment of Soviet power in October, 1917, Lenin and Stalin—the latter at that time headed the People's Commissariat for Affairs of non-Russian nationalities—signed an appeal to Moslems of Russia and the east: "Henceforth your faith and your customs, your national and cultural institutions are declared free and inviolable. Build up your own national way of life, freely and without hindrance. You have the right to this. Know that your rights, like rights of all peoples in Russia, are protected by the whole might of the Revolution and its organs."

The Civil War was still in progress when Kazakhstan was organised as an autonomous Soviet Republic. On August 26, 1920, Lenin signed a decree to this effect. Local government bodies using the native tongue were set up, Kazakh schools were opened, clubs were established and newspapers, magazines and books were published in the Kazakh language. Even in those days Lenin and Stalin worked out a programme for overcoming the bad heritage handed down from old Russia—inequality in economic, cultural and political life between the more cultured and backward nationalities.

An important step in the strengthening of the Kazakh republic was taken by Lenin when he organized the demarca-

tion of Central Asia on ethnographical lines and added to the republic a number of regions in which a majority of the population were Kazakhs

In 1924 people of the Soviet Union lost their great leader and friend, Vladimir Lenin. The great figure of Lenin lives in the memories of the people and in their creations. Joseph Stalin continuing Lenin's work, led peoples of the Soviet Union—amongst them the Kazakh people—along the path pointed out by Lenin. The achievements made by the Kazakh republic found their reflection in the constitution which the people call the Stalin Constitution after him who drafted it. According to this constitution, adopted by the Congress of Soviets on December 5, 1936, the Kazakh Autonomous Republic was made a constituent republic of the Union.

All sections of the people take part in the government of the Kazakh republic. Amongst the Deputies to the Kazakh Parliament, the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh republic, there are the world famous centenarian Jambul, the former collective farm woman, now agrotechnician, Nuripe Doskozhanova, workers from fish canneries at Guriev, Kadisha Habdullova, also the People's Actress Kulyash Baiseitova.

If you take a glance at the economic map of the U S S R to the south of Orenburg and Omsk you will see a huge stretch of territory, the country of light and heavy industry, the country of coalmines, iron and steel-works, lead refineries and oilwells, the country with largescale mechanised agriculture and highly developed stockbreeding industry, country of science and culture. This is Kazakhstan transformed after the Stalin Five Year Plan.

Many industrial regions and enterprises established in Kazakhstan during the period of the Soviet power play an

important part in the economy of the Soviet Union . such are the Karaganda coal basin, the Emba oilfields, mines and refineries in Altai and at Lake Balkhash, the Chimkent Lead Works, the Aktubinsk Chemical Plants and a number of others. Suffice it to say that a year before the war broke out the coalmining industry increased its output to seventy times more than that of 1913, the chemical industry over sixty-three times and metal industry over 137 times.

During years of the Soviet power, Kazakh collective farms have been equipped with modern machinery Tens and thousands of tractors, combines and other farm machines are in use on the Kazakh fields On the outbreak of the present war the grain output was more than double the pre-revolutionary figure while cotton gathered was eight times that of 1913

During this period new towns have appeared on the map of Kazakhstan A fine contingent of national workers, engineers, teachers, agronomists and others has grown up Talented Kazakhs are making their way in fields of literature, art and science. In Kazakhstan there are now 7,600 schools, dozens of institutions of higher learning and scientific research institutes, a branch of the Academy of Sciences of the U S S R —which this year will become an independent Academy—thirty-seven theatres, thousands of towns and rural clubs and other cultural and educational establishments In this way under Stalin's leadership the great behests of Lenin are being fulfilled.

Naturally, when the war broke out, the Kazakh people, like all other peoples inhabiting the Soviet Union, were unanimous in their support of the war effort. They have never been deterred by difficulties and privations The Kazakhs were fighting on all fronts and Germans called them "terrible

soldiers " Orders and medals have been awarded to thirty-four thousand Kazakhs, forty-nine have earned the coveted title of Hero of the Soviet Union

Those who remained at home supported the Red Army by their selfless toil The new industrial east, built up by Lenin and Stalin, played an important part in making possible the victories of the Red Army During the war-years many new factories have been built in Kazakhstan to work the available rich supplies of raw material New branches of the industry are growing up The industry as a whole has increased production 50% as compared with the last pre-war year and the output of electric power has been doubled Collective farms have become a big source of supply both to the army and the people

The German Fascist rulers had counted on dissension between peoples of the Soviet Union Like all other calculations made by Hitler it proved a failure The friendship of the U S S R peoples has become stronger than ever The multi-national Soviet State built up by Lenin and Stalin has proved an impregnable fortress

The victory opens up new vistas before the Kazakhs and all other peoples in the Soviet Union—new prospects for peaceful construction and further improvement in their material and spiritual wellbeing—such is the dream of all freedom-loving peoples all over the world



## CHAPTER XX

### Alma-Ata, The Youthful Capital

Situated in the foothills of the gigantic mountain range of the Trans-Ili Ala-Tau with its snowcapped peaks and glaciers, is the capital of the Kazakh republic, Alama-Ata, which means "Father of Apples"

Alama-Ata nestles amid green orchards and boulevards. Its streets resemble shady alleys of a gigantic park. The "Apport" apples grown in the orchards of Kazakhstan are famous throughout the U S S R.

The history of Alama-Ata dates back to 1855, when Russian settlers founded the town of Verny on the site of the ancient Kazakh town Almaty wrecked by wars in the 16th century. In 1917 the town had a total of 35,000 inhabitants. There was no electricity and in the evening it was immersed in darkness. The town had two high schools. Situated at a distance of 1,000 kilometers from the nearest railway station, Verny was isolated from the economic and cultural life of Russia. In 1913 it had a mere 572 industrial workers occupied in handicraft shops with a total 1,800,000 rubles worth of output.

In 1929 Verny regained its old Kazakh name of Alma-Ata to become the capital of the Kazakh people awakened to a new life by Soviet power. In 1939, the Turkestan-Siberian Railway (Turksib) was built to connect Siberia with Central Asia *Via* Alama-Ata. Since then the city has been developing with seven-league strides. At the beginning of 1939 its population reached 230,000, i.e., a nearly sevenfold increase as compared with 1917.

The appearance of the city has changed. Street cars now run through its asphalted streets, water mains and drainage pipes have been laid. In the evening its streets are flooded with light. Noteworthy among the numerous buildings erected here during the Soviet period is the brick building of the Kazakh State Theatre of Opera and Ballet, distinguished by the fine, sculptured lines.

In some 10 to 15 years Alama-Ata has developed into the economically most important centre of the Kazakh S S R with a highly developed processing industry. At the beginning of 1941, the number of industrial workers in the Kazakh capital has increased 25 times more than in 1917.

New machine building plants, textile mills, canneries and other enterprises have been added in Alama-Ata during the war. Construction is underway at present on four hydro-electric stations to supply power to the steadily growing industry. The last few years have seen Alama-Ata develop into one of the most important centres of film production in the Soviet Union.

Alama-Ata is the centre of the regenerated and flourishing national culture of the Kazakh people. Nine institutions established there for the first time after the Revolution include a university, two pedagogical institutes, a mining and metal and medical institute, two agricultural institutes, a law school and an institute of journalism. In addition the city has 19 technical and other schools. They have a student body of more than 10,000. More than 40,000 children are attending public schools.

Alama-Ata has 25 scientific research institutes headed by the Kazakhstan Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the

U.S.S.R. which work on problems connected with the tapping of Kazakhstan's natural wealth, its history, literature, language etc. Alama-Ata has a branch of the Lenin All-Union Academy of Agricultural Sciences. The city has a botanical garden and zoo, an observatory, Kazakh, Russian and Uigur theatres—opera and ballet and dramatic theatres—a philharmonic society, a big public library named after the great Russian poet Alexander Pushkin and an ethnographic museum. Many newspapers and magazines are published in Alama-Ata in the Kazakh and Russian languages.

The youthful capital of Soviet Kazakhstan is developing rapidly, reflecting the sweeping progress of the Kazakh Republic.

## CHAPTER XXI

# The Collective-Farmers

By V SHNIREV

*(Assistant Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars,  
the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic)*

The collective-farmers of Kazakhstan greeted the Anniversary of the Soviet State with major achievements in agriculture. Inspired by the brilliant successes gained by the Red Army in the present large scale offensive, the toilers of the Kazakh rural areas fulfilled their obligations to the state ahead of schedule.

Reports from collective-farms leading in the socialist competition continue to arrive daily in Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan. The collective-farms of the Karaganda region reported that they had finished their deliveries to the state 24 days ahead of the schedule and thirty days earlier than last year. The Karaganda peasants, likewise, practically fulfilled the state plan for livestock breeding in seven months in the current year. They said in their report that the cattle were well provided with winter fodder. In addition, the collective-farmers of the Karaganda region sent thousands of herd of horned cattle, horses, sheep, pigs and a great number of domestic fowl to collective-farms in the liberated districts.

Similar success was achieved by livestock farmers in the Guryovsk region. They fulfilled their programme of increasing their herd of horned cattle by 102 per cent, horses by 101 per cent and sheep and goats by 105 per cent.

Good results were recorded by peasants in the Chinsk district in the Djamboul region. This district successfully completed its deliveries of agricultural products to the state. Most of the collective-farms here fulfilled their plans in sugar beet deliveries. The "Belbasar" collective-farm exceeded its programme in grain deliveries to the state, as well as in increasing their herd of horned cattle, horses and camels by 107, 116 and 133 per cent respectively. In addition, the "Belbasar" farmers received nearly 400 centners of sugarbeet from each hectare. There are hundreds of collective-farms in Kazakhstan which, like the "Belbasar" collective-farms, have distinguished themselves in agricultural competition conducted this year throughout the republic.

The majority of collective-farms in the southern districts of the Alama-Ata, Djamboul, Akmolinsk regions greeted the 26th Anniversary of the October Revolution by fulfilling their obligations to the Soviet State which were enumerated in a letter to Marshal Stalin. Completing their harvesting campaign and deliveries to the state, the collective-farmers loaded dozens of wagons of trains with grain and meat to be sent as their present to the advancing Soviet armies, and the Soviet population in the liberated districts of the Ukraine, Smolensk and Orel regions. The patriotism of the rural toilers found its new expression in a popular movement to contribute cereals to the special fund of the Supreme Command of the Red Army. The collective-farmers of the Kirov district in the south Kazakhstan region were the first to donate to these funds thousands of poods of grain earned this summer. This example was followed by the peasants of many other districts of Kazakhstan. Zaburavny, Chairman of the "Mashina" collective-farm, contributed 90 poods from his personal stores, while

Pospelov, a farmer, donated 108 poods. Hundreds of carts carrying grain contributed by patriotic farmers, are winding their way to the state elevators. This drive, launched by the rural population of Kazakhstan, will supply the frontline units and toilers of the Soviet industrial centre, with additional hundreds of thousands poods of bread.

## CHAPTER XXII

### In Apple Country

By A. KHAVIN

Four days from the Moscow train bound for Alma-Ata leaves the hungry steppe behind, and, beginning from the station onward to the capital of Kazakhstan, you travel through a country of apples. At every station baskets piled high with luscious fruit-apples of every kind known species, size and colour—are offered to you. Here are big white apples of Kazakhstan and velvety “Anise” apples and Bellefleur and Ukrainian Antonovka—a big yellow apple, etc.

As you approach Alma-Ata huge tawny Vernen Apport apples begin to appear, a species, well-known far beyond borders of Kazakhstan.

Nowhere in the world does this species grow to such a size with such ripe colouring and aromatic taste. These beautiful Alma-Ata apples also have the property of being hardy and suitable for transportation. Perhaps no other gift brought such joy to sailors of the Baltic and Panfilov's guardsmen as these tender fruit parcels which are continuously being sent to the front by people of Kazakhstan.

Orchards occupy over eight thousand hectares in the Alma-Ata region. The very name of the city itself is significant. Alma-Ata means “father of apples.” Orchards lie at every step—they spread through the city to the very foothills.

of northern Transian where they merge with endless thickets, wild apples, fruits which are almost no inferior to their "cultivated brethren "

Gorny, a gigantic collective farm which has a millionaire's income, is situated in suburbs This farm owes its fame and its enormous profits entirely to its apple orchards

Accompanied by the agronomist Nikolai Kurilov I walked through the orchard All fruits of the earth seem to be collected in this little corner paradise Here are golden apple, of autumn, Red conical, Kandilsnap and Red Kalvil species, Napoleon, Orleans Rennet Next to them grow wonderful pears—the queen of forest, Yuryevka Olivierdeserre, and Melting Duchess

With the enthusiasm of a man speaking about his life's work, the agronomist tells me how collective farm horticulturists cultivated these riches

In spring 1943 we saved the orchard with great difficulty from the greenfly and this year we had still harder struggle against drought," he said

" While saving the crop collective-farmers once more had an opportunity to be convinced of the strength of collective labour," continued Kurilov "No individual farm could have applied agro-technical measures on such a large scale or called in the help of the urban population. And the results are here for all to see The collective farm is picking a record crop from its best plots—330 centners per hectare "



Kurilov picked and offered me a beautiful red-tinge apple.

"This is Tyrolese guest—Rosemary—" he said "Before reaching us this apple has travelled a long road At first the species was successfully cultivated in the Crimea, later it was introduced into Turkistan, from there it went to the outskirts of Tashkent and only after that appeared in Kazakhstan But here we get a much richer crop from Rosemary than they do in Tyrol or the Crimea" he concluded triumphantly

In the evening we had tea in the garden and from time to time we could hear ripe apples falling on earth with the special thud familiar to all gardeners.

Nikolai Kurilov told me how horticulturists of Kazakhstan are changing the nature, how orchards and fruit gardens are springing up in sun-parched steppe

I listened with interest to his story of Semipalatinsk Doctor Kranov who planted orchard on rocky soil on shores of the Irtysh and succeeded in growing not only apples, plums, cherries and apricots but five species of grapes No less interesting was the tale of persistent and successful experiments of the horse driver Pozychenyuk resulting in the cultivation of wonder Ussurian plums, strawberries, raspberries and gooseberries in fruit garden steppe of the collective farm situated in the Aktyubinsk region in the area where heat in the summer reaches plus fifty-five degrees and cruel frosts prevail in the winter

## CHAPTER XXIII

# Kazakh State University

By M MAKAROV

One who revisits Alma-Ata, capital of Kazakh S S R would not recognise the town to-day. It has grown and acquired numerous interesting buildings, not the least of which is Kazakh State University of which the republic is justifiably proud. The university is located in one of the city's most beautiful streets and is architecturally very interesting. In its tenth anniversary, the city, indeed the entire republic, is displaying particular interest in their first institution of higher learning.

I had occasion to talk with several professors of university and learnt from them that it has become a true cultural centre of the republic. Ten years ago no one would have believed that such a place would come into existence so rapidly with five departments, training hundreds of young mathematicians, physicists, botanists, physiologists, chemists, historians and linguists. However, it is a miracle that has taken place. To-day the university has twenty-six laboratories and nineteen scientific studies. The library consists of 160,000 books. The university botanical gardens and zoological museum contain very rare items which specialists from other republics come to study.

There are seventy professors and docents (lecturers)

giving lectures in this large Soviet institution of learning. 35 of these scientists are Kazakhs, seven of them graduates of this same university where they remained to do post-graduate work and then to teach

Particular success has been achieved during war years. Like other scientific and educational institutions of the Soviet Union the university has done much for the front. A large group of professors, docents and students of senior courses have devoted themselves to study of the republic's natural resources. Expeditions were sent out to study Kazakhstan's flora and brought back detailed data. The university's scientists have done considerable work on problems connected with the development of the coal and non-ferrous metals' industries, as well as creation of the iron industry in Kazakhstan. In its effort to aid industry and agriculture the university has set up several special scientific production laboratories and shops. In the course of the war these laboratories have put out considerable defence material.

There is no district anywhere in the vast republic where the university's graduates are not working to-day. In the past two years twenty of the university's young scientific workers presented theses for the degree of Candidate of Science and three for that of Doctor of Science. There are some 1,000 young people in the university. The staff has carried out two hundred scientific works since the outbreak of the war, all of them connected with the development of the republic's economy. Its scientific work has earned the university wide popularity in all industrial centres of Kazakhstan. The most

important of these researches have been published recently in "scientific notes" of the university. Nor has this scientific activity prevented students and teaching staff from taking part in such urgent tasks of war-time as construction of hydro-electric power plant and harvesting crops.

The university remembers with pride its sons and daughters who gave up their scientific labours temporarily and went to fight in defence of their Soviet land. There are over 100 boys and girls who enrolled as volunteers and went to the front. Some of them have become officers, many have won government decorations for gallantry displayed on the battlefield. Vasily Polevik, one of the university's scientific workers, has risen to the rank of Major General and two former students, Smagilova and Popov, have become heroes of the Soviet Union.

## CHAPTER XXIV

# Kazakhstan in History

By V KIRPOTIN

Soviet Kazakhstan, one of the sixteen constituent republics of the U.S.S.R., covers a vast territory stretching nearly from the very mouth of the Volga to Chinese Singkiang. The area of Kazakhstan—2,700,000 square kilometers—is six times as large as Germany and 9 times as large as Italy.

The history of the Kazakh people, the majority of whom led a nomadic life until a few decades ago, goes back many centuries. Chinese and Arabs, Mongols, and Turkic tribes invaded Kazakhstan. As far back as in the 11th and 12th centuries the tribes which subsequently formed the Kazakh people came in contact with Rus. The chronicles record that the "Black Hoods"—the name by which the chronicles designated the Kazakh tribes—rejoiced at the accession to the throne of popular Kiev provinces and mourned their death. These records show that there existed common political interests between Russia and the Kazakh tribes in those days.

Under Tsardom the Kazakh people suffered oppression. The freedom-loving Russian people also strove for a better life and a fairer state system. This gave rise to sympathy and a sense of unity between the Kazakh and the Russian peoples. In the joint struggle for freedom was shaped the community of the historic destiny of the two peoples.

Pushkin travelled in Kazakhstan, and in his papers has been found a record of the Kazakh folk epic "Kozy-Kurpesh and Bayan-Slu". The Ukrainian poet and artist Taras Shevchenko showed a warm interest in Kazakhstan and its people. The Kazakh scientist Chokan Valikhanov was a friend of Dostoevsky and a pupil of the famous Russian geographer Semyonov-Tyanshansky. Valikhanov loved the Russian people and his dream was to make the Russian culture the possession of his own Kazakh people. "That was the new Koran in his life," wrote one of his friends.

Abay Kunanbayev, the greatest Kazakh poet of the 19th century, who played an enormous role in the cultural development and enlightenment of his people, learned the Russian language and studied Russian literature from his early youth. His friends were the pupils of the famous Russian thinker and democrat Chernyshevsky. Abay translated the works of Krylov, Pushkin and Lermontov into the Kazakh language.

Ibray Altysarin, who may be regarded as the founder of Kazakh secular education and artistic prose, set himself the aim of introducing the progressive ideas of the Russian people among his people.

The establishment of the Soviet system brought the Kazakh people freedom and statehood. With the help of the great Russian people the Kazakh people made rapid strides along the road of cultural progress. Before the Soviet times only 2 per cent of the population of Kazakhstan could read and write. To-day universal education is the law in Kazakh-

stan. Under Tsardom there was not a single secular school for Kazakhs. To-day Kazakhstan has 3,286 elementary and middle schools with instruction in the native tongue.

The Abay Pedagogical Institute in Alma-Ata, the capital of the republic, has played a great part in the creation of the new Kazakh culture

This institute has become a centre of learning, in which have developed forces of the new Kazakh intelligentsia, teacher writers, scientists

Kazakhstan has at present 38 professional theatres, including the national Opera and Ballet Theatre, organized with the assistance of some of the best Moscow experts

The work of the best contemporary Kazakh writers Auezob, Musrepov, Mukanov, has been largely influenced by Gorky, Mayakovsky and the older Russian classics

The Soviet Constitution has set up the best forms for the development of all the peoples united in the Soviet Union. The nearly 100 years old folk-poet of Kazakhstan, the patriarch of contemporary Kazakh poetry, Jamboul, expressed this idea in enthusiastic verse

“ Sing ye akyns, let your songs pour forth !

Sing of the Constitution of Stalin !

With songs, oh akyns, appear at assemblies,

With songs of brotherhood among great peoples,

With songs of our prosperous, flowering country,

With songs that to labour and victories call

Millions of hearts have been warmed with the care

Of Stalin, our father, of Stalin the Wise ”

## CHAPTER XXV

The Last Journey of the Great  
Minstrel*(On the death of Jamboul)*

By MUKHTAR AUEZOV

(Professor Mukhtar Auezov is a prominent Kazakh writer and a literary scholar. He is author of works dealing with Kazakh literature and particularly folklore. He is also author of the popular historical novel about the classic Kazakh literature, "Abay", and is known as a playwright and critic. For his distinguished contribution to the development of Kazakh literature the Soviet Government decorated him with the Order of Red Banner of Labour)

On June 22 the great Soviet poet and folksinger of Kazakhstan, Jamboul Jabayev, died at the age of over ninety-nine. On June 24 the people of Alma-Ata marched in an endless stream past the bier of their renowned countryman and great citizen in the Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre where the poet's body lay on the stage on a dais covered with velvet and strewn with thousands of flowers. Scores of thousands of people of all ages from children to young who attend school came to the venerable old man to pay their last tribute to the great *akyn*. All these people felt as if they were Jamboul's children. For that matter, the city itself, its capital Kazakhstan, lying amid the verdure of its numerous gardens, is young enough to be his child, as it were.



Never before has the city of Alma-Ata paid such homage to any of its citizens, never have funeral rites here been performed with such solemnity. The last chords of the funeral march died down as the last citizens took leave of their favourite singer. The motor car with Jamboul's coffin started out followed by long cortege cars with members of the government and delegations from various organizations on journey beyond the city to the *akyn's* collective farm in the Jamboul district where the body was buried the next day, on June 25.

A large number of collective-farmers, men and women from the neighbouring districts, assembled in Jamboul's collective farm to meet the funeral cortege. When the car carrying the coffin appeared in the street of the village, the oldest living *akyn* Umurzak, seventy-eight years of age, began to sing the traditional leave-taking song. It was caught up by other folk singers, Jamboul's pupils who stood at definite intervals among the crowd. The song of his native mountains and valleys with the body of the great songmaker was met at the outskirts of his village accompanied it to the large, white *jurta* in which Jamboul was born and lived for many years. In this *jurta*, put up in Jamboul's garden near his large house, the body rested till the next morning. All the night long the poet's kinsfolk, collective-farmers, men, women, children and grandchildren, took leave of the body.

Next day Jamboul was buried in his own garden. The last funeral oration was sung, composed and uttered with feeling by the late poet's talented pupil, Ugbetal. Woven into it were words and images of Jamboul himself and this lent it

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particular meaning and significance, Over the fresh grave it spoke of the immortality of Jamboul's poetry

When earth struck the coffin a handful of silver coins was thrown up in the air, according to the ancient Kazakh tradition, by an old collective-farmer, a close friend of Jamboul's Scores of people, government representatives, actors, writers, collective-farmers picked up coins from the grass as a souvenir of this day

The great *akyn*, the poet of the Stalin epoch, Jamboul enjoyed boundless affection of his people His genius drew on the inexhaustible source of popular wisdom for inspiration The people were his audience and his judge They were his teachers since those distant days when, at the age of thirteen, the young Jamboul began to compose his first songs under the age of thirty-eight at a poetical tournament of improvisers, in which one of his rivals was the old *akyn* Kolan Kulambet, Jamboul was pronounced the victor, both by his renowned rival and by the people who made up the audience

He gained a wide recognition Those were days of Tsardom, and the folk singer, who wandered from village to village over the vast steppes of Kazakhstan, sang of people's sorrows and prophesied a better future which he lived to see in his advanced age In his songs, which he recited and sang to the accompaniment of the two-string *dombra*, he gave expression to the dreams and aspirations of the popular masses That is why, after victory in the October Revolution, he became the most vivid and talented singer of the victories and achievements of the socialist epoch.

Simple and full of wisdom in his simplicity, Jamboul was unsurpassed in his songs of Lenin and Stalin. In their images he found an embodiment and fulfilment of his and his people's ideas—heroes who saved the people from eternal darkness and oppression.

Jamboul composed numerous songs about the Red Army, the brotherhood and friendship of the formerly divided peoples in the Soviet Union and the defence of the country. In the last years of his life, during the great war against the German Fascists, Jamboul, despite his ailing health, produced powerful songs calling for defence of the fatherland. His songs and messages ("My children, people of Leningrad", "To the defenders of Moscow", "To the defenders of Stalingrad"), his profoundly lyrical and life-asserting songs "On the death of my son" (Jamboul's son was killed in the defence of Stalingrad) enjoyed, and still enjoy, wide popularity. Jamboul's verses appeared in the front newspapers, were published in separate booklets and leaflets, and millions of people know them by heart.

Jamboul lived to see the bright day of victory of which he was profoundly confident. It is symbolic that on May 9, the poet, already bed-ridden, composed his last song which he called the "Song of Victory".

Jamboul's services as poet and citizen were fully appreciated by the people. He was elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh S S R. The Soviet Government decorated him with the Order of Lenin, Order of Red Banner of Labour and the Order of the Badge of Honour. He was also awarded the Stalin Prize. Jamboul's songs and poems have been published in all the languages of the Soviet peoples and his name is known far beyond the borders of his country.

## CHAPTER XXVII

**Raillery Contest of Kazakhstan Bards***By* CURSKY

Many poems, legends and songs of great beauty were created by the Kazakh people through the centuries. From generation to generation these people have been accustomed to their bards, or Akyns as they call them, who made the rounds of the nomad settlements in the steppes to sing and recite their ceremonial, popular, lyric and epic poems and legends.

Thus the Akyns came to be the preservers of Kazakh epic literature and folklore, the keepers of their peoples' annals.

In time the Kazakh people gained their freedom and as a member of the family of Soviet nations, prospered from year to year. The Akyns acquired many new songs.

In October 1940, 17,000 Kazakhs went to work in the desert steppes of Kara-kum to dig their irrigation canals. They knew that water meant life and prosperity for them and laboured hard. After working hours they were fond of listening to the songs of their Akyns who now sang about the feats of labour on the great construction job, gave due praise where it was due and ridiculed those who tended to lag. These songs were caught up and sung far and wide.

On camels over the arid wastes of the Kara-Kum the Akyns visited the remote settlements to sing their songs of

When Hitler's hordes fell upon the Soviet Union, the songs of the Akyns struck a militant note. Now, they sang about the heroic struggle of the Soviet people at the front, their selfless effort in the rear and their unbending will to victory.

The contests of the Akyns have been events of outstanding importance in the lives of the Kazakh people for centuries. Such an affair invariably begins with an exchange 'of raille-aitys in the Kazakh language. During the aitys held in the largest and finest tents before the people the Akyns are served mares' milk, tea and varied delicacies by young girls in decorous array. This custom has now been revived.

After an interval of many years, such aitys were again held in Karaganda last summer. The Akyns who participated in the first contest represented the personnels of two mines in the Karaganda coal basin: mine Nr 18 (then in the lead) and Nr 24 (then tending to lag). More than 700 miners, engineers and technicians attended at the large workers' club.

The Akyn Ainabekov of Mine Nr 18 enumerated the achievements of the men he represented and did not miss the opportunity of asking his opponent, the Akyn Mankin of Mine Nr 20 why this largest mine in the basin had failed to cope with its production plan. Akyn Mankin could not help agreeing with Ainabekov, but at the same time whetted his wit upon the shortcomings of Mine Nr 18. The contest waxed warm. The victor was Ainabekov of Mine No 18 which for four months had maintained the challenge Banner of the All-Union Council.

of Trade Unions and the peoples' Commissariat of the Coal Industry

This first aitys held under new conditions and new in form was warmly received. The spectators and listeners were stirred. The results were soon evident. Production tempos increased and Mine Nr 20 began systematically to cope with its production programmes.

Two months later, a second aitys was held between the Akyns of the Karaganda miners and the copper melters of Balkhash. Considerable preparations had been made for this. A group of Karaganda Akyns had first to acquaint themselves with the work in the copper mines of Balkhash. In their turn, a group of Akyns from Balkhash visited the mines and studied the work of various brigades, sections and pits of the Karaganda trust.

The stage of the theatre where the aitys was held was done up to resemble a large Kazakh tent. The Akyns sat on dais. Surrounding them in the tent were the leading workers from the city of coal and that of copper.

The well-filled hall responded warmly to the repartee on the stage, frequently interrupted by exclamations of approval and stormy applause.

Both the workers of Karaganda and those of Balkhash had worked well. Both coped with their production tasks for the front and thus the Akyns were evenly matched. They were, in fact, unable to beat one another.

This Akyn contest was followed by several others in Karaganda Region between country-

districts, between collective farms, large plants and factories. This was repeated in other regions of Kazakhstan and in December a republic-wide aytys was held in the capital of Kazakhstan—Alma-Ata. Here there were Akyns from all parts of the republic, those representing the coalminers of Karaganda, the copper melters of Balkhash, the lead mines of Chumkent and Leninogorsk, the rice growers of Azyi-Ordy. To the throb of the *dombras* the contest between the grey-heads began. They were headed by the 100-year old Akyn Dzhambul. The contest was begun by the Akyns of South Kazakhstan who lavishly praised the spirited horses bred in their region for the Red Army. Finished with this, this leading Akyn addressed his neighbour, the Akyn of Azyi-Ordy Region. "How did you avail yourselves of the richness of your Region? Sing us something about it."

The aged Akyn of Kzyl-Ordy complied with a song about the achievements of his region, described its great flocks of sheep grazing in the steppes, its rice plantations and the Aral Sea with its wealth of fish. He was interrupted by the Akyn from the south. There are plenty of shortcomings among your people and don't think that we have forgotten about them. The songs grew heated.

This pair was relieved by other singers from various regions of Kazakhstan. The contest lasted for several days. At a final session, the jury determined the victors who received valuable presents—horses, camels and carpets. Thus ended a time-honoured contest of the Akyns traditional in form and up-to-date in content.

The new type of aitys aims to increase labour productivity, to eliminate shortcomings, to strengthen discipline at industrial enterprises and on the collective farms, to popularize the leading workers, the stakhanovites in industry, to make known their experience on the job and finally to stimulate the working people to greater effort for the front and thereby hasten victory



## CHAPTER XXVIII

# A Kazakh Bard

By I OSTROVSKY

Among guests attending the All-Union Conference on Folk-Lore in Moscow was Kenen Azerbayev, an Alyn—a bard or minstrel. He is 63 years of age. Tall-shaped, with a gaunt energetic face, bearing marks of the fierce winds of the steppes and the burning rays of the sun in Central Asia, he stands out among the other folk artists at the conference. He is a poet and singer, a composer and a musician. His melodious songs and ringing verses and the music for them he improvises in front of the listeners.

During one of the sittings of the conference came a salute in honour of the taking of the Gorodok by the Red Army. Azerbayev went out on the street to see the rockets, and on his return to the hall, took up his *dombra* (a national musical instrument resembling a mandoline) and with a strong voice, sounding quite young, burst into song:

“ Like sheep they are running, the vile German crew,  
Lashed by the Red Army, what else can they do?  
The guns that are booming, and gay lights above  
Salute the victorious men that we love ”

When he runs through the strings of his *dombra* with his nimble fingers and begins to sing his merry and witty ditties you cannot help thinking of the minstrels or troubadours of old.

Kenen's father was a farm labourer and Kenen himself—a shepherd till the age of 17. Once, at a great festival, he came across Jamboul Jabayev, the greatest Kazakh akyn and patriarch of folk poetry. Jamboul was chanting one of his songs full of deep feelings and love for his people. That meeting changed the whole course of Kenen Azerbayev's life. He was entranced by Jamboul songs, replete with poetic beauty, and became his pupil.

The original art of the gifted akyns of Kazakhstan, the bards who kept alive the national epic, has always been extremely popular among and loved by the Kazakh masses. This oral art was the sole means of spreading poetry and the rudiments of literature among the masses of the people. For prior to the October Revolution there were neither Kazakh books, nor newspapers, nor theatres.

Topical political themes and burning social questions of the day always dominated in the many-sided improvisations of the former wandering minstrels. Along with this the akyns extolled their national heroes and sang of the heroism of the people, of magnanimity and of pure friendship. The freedom-loving Kazakh people guarded the akyns' songs like apple of their eye. There were no written records of these songs, but they were passed from father to son and remained in the memory of generations.

Inspired by the heroic exploits of the Red Army and glorious deeds of the Soviet people in the rear, Kenen dedicated many of his fine songs and poems to the heroes of the

Patriotic War, to his native horsemen, to Stakhanovites of factories and fields By these poems and songs he inspires the Kazakh youth to feats of labour He composed a touching musical poem on the loss of his two sons at the front

Kenen Azerdayev is also the author of big epic poems, as for instance, one entitled " Stalin " He feels the poerty of life and sees it latent even in ordinary everyday happenings

His songs cannot be conveyed in prose, but it may be said that there is a ring of optimism, vigorous vitality and captivating sincerity in every one of them Many of his songs are included in the published collections " The Anger of the People," " The 28th Battery" and " Marching Songs "

Only now, in the evening of his life, has he learned to read and write But even now he does not himself write down his songs on paper He knows by heart about 1,000 ancient folk songs, many eastern legends and Indian and Arabian fairy tales

## CHAPTER XXIX

## Almankul Apa, the Kazakh Poetess

By LINA VOITOLOVSKAYA

Leaves of the old elm tree curled in a sultry heat so that it cast a delicate, lacelike shadow. Beneath this shadow sat an old woman in white turban and silk robe. She sat in an oriental fashion with her legs folded under her spinning, and her swarthy sensitive fingers moved nimbly and rapidly as she worked. Flakes of white wool settled on the grass. Even the hum of spindles, in harmony with the peaceful scene, and thread kept running swiftly through her fingers as she told her story.

"I was very young indeed when I was sold to my husband" related the old woman. "I do not remember exactly, but I must have been eleven or a year older. You know how it was in those days! Girls were sold in marriage. A well big kalym (price) was paid for because I was pretty and merry-eyed. I was taken to the tent of the old man whom, I was henceforth to call my husband. He had a big herd of sheep and many camels and heaps of blankets. I was afraid of him. How could it be otherwise when he was a stranger and old and I was young and full of joy? But I called him my husband. And soon I bore him a son. This first son of mine lived for a very short time. I do not remember what he died of. Then I presented him with another son. This one lived but, to tell

the truth, I was not very happy that I had him. I was very young. I wanted to know much, and to see much and to laugh and sing and meet people. But my husband made me sit all the time with the child to make sure that he did not die like the first. I was sad. And for the first time I composed a song. It was not much of a song because I had never heard any before except those that our shepherds sang. It was a sad song and I used to sing it to my son. Then my old husband died and I became the mistress of his herd. What need had I of sheep and blankets and rugs and shepherds? I wanted but one thing to learn to sing my songs.

I knew that there were big cities in the world and people who not only sang their songs but also wrote them down for others to sing.

I sold all my sheep, tents and carpets and left for a big city. To-day this city is called Kyzylorda.

I bought many books many of them printed and many in beautiful handwriting artistically inscribed by ancient scribes. There are books in various languages, even in Farsi. I went to teachers and asked them to instruct me. Soon I learnt to read and books became my friends.

But it was not enough just to learn, I had to live, too, and bring up my son. And I was young and inexperienced. The only thing that I had been taught to do in my childhood was to spin and weave carpets and to make mats. So I began to weave carpets. I sometimes wrote letters for people who could not do so themselves. In this manner I earned my living.

Meanwhile I composed more and more songs and learnt to write them down

Then came one of the happiest days of my life I heard the famous bard Jamboul and he heard me Jamboul said to me 'Almankul, you are real poet inspite of the fact that you are a woman "

The old woman fell silent But white thread kept running through her swiftly moving fingers Suddenly, the sound of a child crying reached us and the old woman rose and went to the house

A pretty young woman came out and sat down on grass by my side

" Has Almankul been telling you about her life ?" she asked " She is wonderful, is she not ?" Then after a short pause, she added " My husband and her son Adbilda Tazhibayev is also a poet, and a good one, they say He has been decorated by the government But he never reads his verses to anyone before his mother has approved of them and thoroughly discussed them with him Many writers come to her for advice And I must say" said the young woman with a smile, " They rather fear her criticism for it is severe, direct and wise "

We sat on in silence for a while in oppressive heat

" I am somewhat surprised" I said " that Almankul Apa still manages the household and spins, knits , yet she finds time to devote to her art "

" Oh, yes" replied the young woman , " she is very energetic. She likes to do things herself, and, as for spinning,

she says it helps her to think. Sometimes she spins and sings in a low voice for hours—hardly moving except for her fingers. That means she is composing a new song. And then we do not disturb her for she does not hear anything and does not reply any way . ”

“ Has Almankul Apa told you about her book of verse ? No ? well, it is our first book written by a woman poet. You probably know that save the verses of the great poet Abai we had almost no written literature at all before the Soviet power and only oral folk poetry. Almankul Apa is one of the first among the Kazakh writers who has written down her compositions. Her first book of verse, called “ Songs of Mother ” were published in 1938.

Some poems of this collection have been translated into Russian and included in “ Songs of the Steppe ”—an anthology of Kazakh literature.

To-day Almankul Apa devotes herself almost exclusively to translations. She is now translating Farsi folk poetry into Kazakh and is completing translations from Alisher Navoi ”

## CHAPTER XXX

# Soviet Women Of Kazakhstan In The Days of the War

By, B U ERMAGAMBETOVA

*(Vice Chairman, Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Kazakhstan  
Socialist Republic)*

During the years of the Soviet power in Kazakhstan great efforts have been made to raise the cultural level of women and to attract them to the management of state affairs. In pre-revolutionary Kazakhstan the Kazakh girls received practically no education whatsoever. To-day elementary and middle schools are attended by hundreds of thousands of Kazakh girls, besides those specialising in one or other technical school.

Prior to the war over a hundred thousand women were employed at various industrial enterprises on railways, in building trades and machine and tractor stations. Since the war their number has more than trebled. In the town of Alma-Ata, the capital of the republic, alone tens of thousands of girls and women are doing various jobs at factories and offices. In agriculture women labour prevails everywhere. During the war women have demonstrated their patriotism and love for their motherland. Two hundred Kazakh women were awarded orders and medals of the Soviet Union. More



than a thousand women were awarded by the Kazakhstan Government.

Fifteen thousand women, thirty-three percent of the total number, have been elected deputies of regional town and village Soviets

Many women deputies have been charged with responsible duties in the regional district and town Soviets

Women have displayed exceptional ability in the management of state affairs. Thus the Chairman of the Executive Committee of Suzak district in the southern Kazakhstan region has developed her district into one of the most advanced regions

Since the war a good deal of attention was paid to the work among women, especially villages

No matter where woman is employed, she never ceases to worry about her children. This is particularly true with reference to women with small children. Therefore, improvement of living conditions of women in towns and villages is of paramount importance. New kindergartens have been opened, nurseries, playgrounds, laundries and relief to the families of fighting men has been extended on a large scale



The Mullahs of the Bekino Mosque in Samarkand contributed 73,000 rubles to the Defence Fund. Makhmudov Arit (third from the left), shows the Moslems the receipt from the State Bank for this sum



•ABDUVALI MUMINOV

## CHAPTER XXXI

# Hero Of The Soviet Union M. Habdulin, The Writer

By, PETER SKOSYREV

Major Malik Habdulin, on whom the title of Hero of the Soviet Union was conferrrd a few months ago, is a Kazakh by nationality and writer by profession

If at the time when he was a university student someone had told him that a few years hence he would be a renowned Red Army Commander he would not have believed it. He was aspiring to become a student of folklore and considered that his life-work lay in recording and studying the greatest possible number of songs and legends composed by the Kazakh people in the far away past. And is there a profession less military than that of a collector of folklore? As is generally known, the ancient Kazakh people, who for ages had been leading a nomad life in the steppes of Southern Siberia and Central Asia, were devoid of literature to speak of up to 1917. It is natural that the Kazakhs, deprived of urban culture, did not possess a written language. Their poetry found its expression only in oral lays and songs. And Malik Habdulin set himself the aim of making a study of his native folklore and of the history of the development of Kazakh oral poetry.

In his boyhood Malik was fond of listening to the tales and legends which his grandmother, a simple and illiterate woman, and the wife of a shepherd, used to tell him

Habdulin liked the story about the dragon who came to the earth to swallow the sun. The dragon was greedy, cruel and strong, he devoured everything he saw on earth, then he looked at the sun and decided to gobble it up if it wouldn't bow to him. "Bow down to me and worship me, or I'll devour you," shouted the dragon to the sun. People heard this shout and were frightened. The dragon had 100 claws and there is only one sun. Of course the dragon would overpower it and they would never see daylight again. People advised the sun to climb down and bow before the great serpent. But there was one hero, a simple Kazakh shepherd, who decided to sacrifice himself and enter into battle with the dragon so that the sun may remain in the sky. He had only two hands, but so intense was his hatred for the miscreant, and so strong his love for the sun that he overcame the dragon with its hundred claws and saved the sun.

Habdulin recalled this tale on the day when the radio brought the news of Hitler's treacherous attack on the Soviet Union. The post-graduate of the Alma-Ata Scientific Research Institute went to the military commissariat to change his civilian clothes for the uniform of the Soviet soldier.

In those days a division was being formed in Alma-Ata which, a few months later became famous through the world under the name of the iron Panfilov Division for the part it

played in the great battle at the Moscow approaches in November 1941 Habdulin, the scientific research worker and collector of Kazakh fairy tales, became a fighter in that division

Most of the men of the Panfilov Division, like Habdulin himself, had never before served in the army, many of them had never left the bounds of Kazakhstan. At first they found it very hard to resist the pressure of the Hitlerites, especially in view of the fierce frosts outside Moscow in that year, while the Panfilovites were born and bred in the hot climes of the Kazakh steppes. But the hatred for the revived "Dragon" helped them to overcome all hardships. The division covered itself with unfading glory, and Habdulin came out of these battles with the rank of an officer, as in most difficult moments he manifested resourcefulness, presence of mind and determination which proved that not only does he remember the stories about heroes, but that when the need arises he is capable of carrying their meaning into effect.

Habdulin had not left the front for 30 months. He traversed the glorious path of the Red Army offensive from the walls of Moscow to Vitebsk, was wounded several times and carried out bold raids in the rear of the enemy. Once, together with his comrade, a Russian Red Army man, he captured the staff of a German unit. For his exceptional valour on the battle-field the title of Hero of the Soviet Union was conferred on him.

Not for a single day during all these 20 months of heavy

fighting, did Habdulin forget about his peaceful literary vocation. In their leisure hours he would entertain his men with stories of the great titans of the past, and would record the tales and songs that would be composed at the front. And he wrote a big book about the remarkable men whom he encountered at the front.

"There were Russians and Ukrainians, Kazakhs and Kirghizians in the unit under my command," said Habdulin to the writer of these lines. "I saw thousands of examples of the manifestation of the feeling of brotherhood which has welded all the Soviet people into one family of warriors, and the idea occurred to me to write a book about the brother peoples who successfully upheld their independence and honour in battles the like of which are unknown in the history of mankind. I have called my book 'My Friends at the Front'. Not a single word of it is invented, but I am sure that a hundred years hence the truth written by me will seem like a legend to our posterity for the exploits of Soviet people at the front are indeed legendary."

Habdulin has written his book in the Kazakh language. It has now been translated into Russian and will shortly be published in Moscow by the State Literary Publishing House.

And the author of the book has once more left for the front.

## CHAPTER XXXII

## Soviet Tadjikistan

Between two mountain ranges—Tyanshan, meaning ‘celestial hills’ and the Pamirs called the ‘roof of the world’, lies Soviet Tadjikistan stretching the U S S R boundary with Afghanistan and Western China

Tadjikistan covers an area of 143,900 square kilometres and has a population of nearly one and half million. The highest mountains in the U S S R, the Stalin Peak, 7,495 metres, the Lenin Peak, 7,127 metres, and the Fedchenko Glacier 77 kilometres long—largest in the world—are found in Tadjikistan.

Under Tsarism Tadjikistan was notorious for its low level of development.

With the fraternal assistance of Russian people, the Tadjiks cast off the fetters of Tsarism and the power of Emir of Bokhara, establishing, in 1924, an autonomous republic which later, in 1929, became a union republic. Three quarters of Tadjikistan's inhabitants are Tadjiks, the remainder being Uzbeks—living in north-west—Kirghiz and Russians. Within the Tadjik republic an autonomous region has been formed on the plateaus and slopes of the Pamirs, with Khorog as its centre, and its population consisting chiefly of Tadjiks and Uzbeks.



Many economic successes have been scored by the people of Tadjikistan since the establishment of the Soviets. An irrigation system has been built in western Tadjikistan and the adjoining mountain with the help of funds allocated by the Soviet Government. Thus, the area under irrigation was, in 1938, 290,000 hectares larger than in 1914, which means an increase of 67 percent. Rice and cotton plantations have been considerably expanded; they are now six times of the size they were in 1914. And their area has increased by 110,000 kilometres. In 1939, Egyptian cotton was raised on an area of 40,000 hectares. Fruit growing is an important occupation in Tadjikistan. On unwatered land the Tadjiks raise wheat and barley covering an area approximately 600,000 hectares—30 percent more than that before the first World War. Nowhere in the world does farming thrive on such an elevated land as it does in Tadjikistan. Here vineyards are spread on land 2,000 metres high and barley is grown 3,500 metres above the sea-level.

Horses, large horned cattle, sheep and goats are found in Alpine pastures. Tadjikistan is famous for its sheep, and it has some of the finest mutton in the world.

Large textile mills sprung up recently in the republic, as well as fruit and vegetable canneries. Coal, oil, gold and non-ferrous and rare metals have become important products. As compared to the pre-Revolutionary times, the volume of production in Tadjikistan has increased no less than 400 times. In the recent years the water power of Tadjikistan's river has been set in exploitation. Tadjikistan had no roads under

Tsarism but only winding paths cutting through the Pamirs with hazardous passageways across yawning abysses of mountain ravines. At present the country is criss-crossed with motor roads.

Soviet Tadjikistan yielded twice the quantity of rare metal concentrates during the past ten months as compared with that yielded last year. Moreover, the republic this year obtained sixty times the quantity of concentrates obtained in the first year of the war. These figures are an indication of the mounting tempo in extraction of important strategic materials in Tadjikistan.

This republic, which was formerly known as an agricultural country with well-developed cotton growing, rice growing, and livestock breeding economies, is rapidly becoming an industrial land. Deposits of iron ore, whose reserves are estimated at thousands of millions of tons, as well as coal and oil have been discovered in mountain regions of Tadjikistan. Deposits of high quality of mica, salt, lazulite have been prospected in Pamir mountains whose peaks are covered with eternal snow. Among glaciers of the Darvaz mountains, whose highest point, the Stalin Peak, is 7,495 meters above sea level, many deposits of rock crystal have been found whose quality is equal to that of the crystal found in Brazil, Madagascar and Japan.

The Tadjikistan branch of the Academy of Sciences, U S S R under whose supervision this geological work is being conducted, has officially reported that, out of ninety-two elements in Mendeleyev's periodic law, over sixty have already been found in Tadjikistan.

The years of the Soviet rule have been marked by a rise in the standard of living and educational level of the Tadjik people. Formerly deprived of all rights and with little say in her own home, the Tadjik woman has gained her emancipation, and is participating in building a new and happier life. 4,000 elementary schools, over a hundred high schools and hundreds of public libraries and club houses have sprung up in the recent years. A quarter million children are attending schools which is 600 times the number of pupils prior to the Soviets. Illiteracy has dropped from almost 100 percent to 28 percent. There are at present five colleges in the republic. Seventy newspapers, mostly in Tadjik, Uzbek and Kirghiz, are published here, while Tadjikistan's national theatres, musicians and artists have gained a country-wide recognition. A good deal of scientific research is carried on in the republic under the auspices of the affiliated branch of the Academy of Sciences, U S S R.

Deeply loyal to Soviet system, which has brought to them freedom, national independence and cultural efflorescence, the Tadjik people sent their fearless sons to defend the mother country against the Nazi hordes.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

# Stalinabad the Capital of Soviet Tadjikistan

By N' PROKHOROV

Not so long ago in place of Stalinabad stood a kishlak (village) with a few hundred mud hovels scattered along the bank of a rapid mountain river. Two or three thousand Tadjiks lived here from time immemorial, cut off from the world by the austere peaks of the Gissar Mountain Range.

At the end of 1924 the Tadjik people united in a nationally homogeneous state—the Tadjik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. The hour had struck when in place of the kishlak Dushambe would arise the future capital of Tadjikistan. The Gissar Valley where the village was situated was the most convenient spot of the chief administrative, economic and cultural centre of the young Soviet republic.

Dushambe at that time was still a typical Central Asiatic mud village which in summer would be enveloped in clouds of dust, and in winter would be immersed in impassable mud. But the time of big changes was already drawing nigh. Buildings of a European type were beginning to arise there. There were schools, hospitals and offices. A railway, which in 1929 connected Dushambe with Tashkent and with the heart of the Soviet Union—Moscow—was being built rapidly. In that

year Tadjikistan was formed into Union Republic directly forming part of the U S S.R and Dushambe was turned into a town named after the great Stalin Another ten years passed and what evolved was more marvellous than any legend

Side by side with the mud village pressed down to the ground grew daily the beautiful city of Stalinabad bathed in green and with many storied buildings In place of impassable mud there began to stretch broad streets paved with asphalt In 1931 a water supply system was constructed which fully met the requirements of the city with its population of 80,000 inhabitants

In old Dushambe kerosene was a rarity When night came everything was enshrouded in darkness Only here and there would burn dimly a primitive Tadjik lamp called "chirok " But in Soviet times a hydro-electric power station was built and started supplying Stalinabad with nearly 20,000 kilowatt hours of electricity

In a place where quite recently ignorant sorcerers or quacks were ruining the health of people, there arose splendidly equipped medical institutions Functioning in Stalinabad are infectious disease hospital, a railway hospital, a tuberculosis hospital and a children's hospital , scientific-research tropical and sanitary bacteriological institutes, four polyclinics, women's tuberculosis, venerological and trachoma dispensaries In large enterprises workers receive first medical aid in special out-patients hospitals set up near the place of their work. The Stalinabad Maternity Home is the best in Central Asia

Old Dushmabe knew no industry except handicraft. But during the periods of the Stalin Five-Year Plans there were established silk-winding and dress-making factories, a brickyard, alabaster, woodworking and leather works and two mechanised bakeries. By the beginning of the war the gross production of industry attained the sum of about 45 million rubles a year.

During the years of Soviet power the formerly quite illiterate Dushambe has turned into a powerful centre of Tajik culture. By the beginning of the war there were 17 schools in Stalinabad. Among the other educational establishments we may mention a teachers' college, a building technical school, an industrial technical school, a medical institute and a secondary medical school.

Old Dushambe knew no literature except fragments from the Koran. Here, in general, it was difficult to find a scrap of printed paper and there was not even one man in a hundred who could read and write. Soviet Stalinabad has become a powerful centre of publishing activity. The Tadjik State Publishing House has issued millions of books and pamphlets.

Tadjiks are now reading in their own native tongue the works of Pushkin and Tolstoy, of Shakespeare and Dickens, of Moliere, Victor Hugo and Flaubert. The schools are fully provided with educational books in the Tadjik language. The Stalinabad Public Library contains half a million volumes, and its manuscript department has more than 20,000 manuscripts in the Arabian and Tadjik languages of which not a few are very rare.

In pre-revolutionary times art stood at an exceptionally low level, not only in Dushambe, but in the whole of the Bukhara of the Emir. Even in the Emir's palace the spectacles given were of a show-booth type. Soviet Tadjikistan may rightly boast of big achievements. In the Stalinabad Dramatic Theatre spectators have an opportunity of seeing performances of Shakespeare's "Othello," Lope de Vega's "Fuente Avejuna," and the works of Tadjiks playwrights who have grown up during the years of Soviet power. An opera and ballet theatre has been opened in the war period and is now preparing for the production of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" to be performed by Tadjik artists.

From the very first days of the war the population of the city rendered ever increasing aid to the Red Army. Stalinabadites collected about 19,000,000 rubles for the defence fund; with the greatest enthusiasm they subscribed their full quota to the War Loan within two or three days of its issue, they shipped scores of carloads with various presents for men on the front and collected for them tens of thousands of warm articles of wear.

Thousands of kilometres separated Stalinabad from the front. Nevertheless Stalinabad turned into one of the sections of that huge war-camp which the whole of the land of the Soviet had become.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

## In the Valley of the Vakhsh

*By* HABIBULLAH

The Tadjiks describe Darya-i-Vakhsh as the Wild River and, indeed, for many centuries, it fully deserved that name. Like most of the rivers in the mountainous parts of Central Asia, it is subject to fierce, destructive spates, converting the shallow and sluggish streams of autumn and winter into torrential floods of spring and summer that come tearing down the valleys when the snow in the mountains melts, floods that carry away with them all the handiworks of man

Tadjikistan, one of the republics which form the Soviet Union, is tucked away in a far corner of Central Asia and is a land of high mountain ranges, amongst them the Pamirs, the roof of the world, from which radiate the world's greatest mountain masses, Tian Shang, Hindu Kush, Karakorum and the Himalayas Tadjikistan, however, also possesses many wide sunny valleys, one of which is the Valley of the river Vakhsh

The legends of the Tadjik people tell how their wild river, the Vakhsh, refuses to submit to the will of the foreign invaders. Time and again, the river, in all its fury, has swept them away from the land they had defiled, flooded their fields and destroyed the irrigation works they had built.



For countless centuries none of the many foreigners who held sway over Tadjikistan, could discover the secret of how the Valley had been irrigated during its period of prosperity; never could they harness the savage Vakhsh and make use of its life-giving waters

Many have been masters of this land of the Tadjiks After Alexander of Macedonia and the Selucid empire which followed his death had passed away, the country, which is now Tadjikistan, became one of the world's cultural centres and an important, integral part of the Persian Empire The Tadjik nation, and its language and culture were formed during this period, and the broad valleys of the Syr Darya, the Zeravshan, the Vakhsh and Ferghana were rich green oases in an arid desert of stony mountains When Firdaussi was writing his immortal Shah Namah the Tadjik cultivators were reaping the rich fruits of their splendidly irrigated soil Then came countless centuries of oppression under the yoke of foreign invaders when the Turk, Arab, Mahmud Ghaznavi, club-footed Timur, Chingis Khan, the Mongol; the Emirs of Khive and Bukhara and, finally, the Satraps of the Russian Tsars ruled the land. Never once, during all these years did Tadjikistan return to the former prosperity of her Golden Age, and every year Darya-i-Vakhsh, the wild River, poured over the broad, once fertile valley, leaving desolation in its wake

The October Revolution of 1917 brought freedom to all the peoples of the old Russian Empire, amongst them

the Tadjik people Once more independent, and freed of all forms of national, religious or political persecution, the Tadjiks set to work with the will to create for themselves a new way of life in accordance with the old traditions which had been handed down through centuries of oppression In this they received the friendly aid of the great Russian people

The old Bobosafed, *the folkbard Hafiz of Tadjikstan*, says

"Only under the Soviet power did the Vakhsh spread joy and not desolation over the whole valley "

Under the Soviet power water became the property of the entire people to be harnessed and used for the benefit of all Collective-farms appeared, canals and huge irrigation works were constructed Cotton, wheat, maize, sugarcane, almonds, apricots, sugarbeet, rubber-bearing plants, and almost every other kind of fruit and vegetable that can be made to grow in the general sub-tropical climate of Central Asia, were introduced

Three Five-Year Plans and two years of intensive wartime Labour made Tadjikistan an important and industrial country with modern, flourishing mechanised agriculture In the sphere of agriculture the valley of Vakhsh occupies an important place

When the old Bobosafed, the Tadjik Hafiz, bade farewell to his grandson, who was leaving for the front, he took him to an ancient mound, embraced him silently breast to breast and knee to knee in accordance with the age-old Muslim custom, picked up a stone from the mound, placed it in the young man's hand and said

"My grandson will pardon me if I, an old man, am

behind the times, but wherever you go in the valley bend low in obeisance over the Darya-i-Vakhsh, the Wild one, and drink from its pure waters until you are filled May the stone from the mound and the waters of the Wild one impart great strength to you, and give you the joys of our days—the days in which you are living the days of the Soviet power Never surrender to the enemy these flowering fields of the Vakhsh Valley, these prosperous kishlaks (villages) that grow up together out of the stones of these once-barren mounds ”

When we consider the wonderful transformation that has taken place during the past twenty-five years in the Valley of the Vakhsh, the meaning of the old Hafiz's words is clear.

Darya-i-Vakhsh, the Wild River, has been harnessed. Mighty excavators, tractors, graders, concrete-mixers, and the eager, willing toil of thousands of free Tadjik farmers—working for themselves and for the common good—have moved millions of cubic yards of earth and rock, so that the dry *nalas* of the valley became life-giving water-courses. Water is so plentifully provided by the mighty Pamirs that every spring is diverted into concrete reservoirs for storage.

Before the Revolution, the Tadjik kishlaks in the Vakhsh Valley were built away up on the hillsides beyond the destructive reach of the savage river, where stones are plentiful and land is scarce So scarce, indeed, is the fertile soil that it was measured by capfull, rather than by acre

Nahim Sharipov, Chairman of one of the Vakhsh collective-farms and a delegate to the Supreme Soviet of the Tadjik Soviet Socialist Republic, tells the story of how the poor dekhans (cultivators) of his kishlak came down into the valley to settle and start life anew

"When we came down into the valley the huge expanse of flat land was too great for our unaccustomed eyes, and we had to find place to settle where would be a landmark to guide us home. We selected this mound with a single mulberry tree which was the only tree growing for miles around. That tree gave its name to the *kishlak* of the Yakuts which we afterwards built. It is amusing to think that, while previously there was here only one mulberry tree, now our village has orchards with hundreds of fruit trees and mulberry trees lining the streets to give us plentiful of shade in hot weather."

"There are one hundred and twenty-seven families in our collective-farm and, in addition to our fields and orchards, we have large herds of flocks. Our stud-farm of horses has over two hundred fine animals, then we have 150 heads of excellent cattle and a flock of one thousand two hundred sheep."

"Before the war began, almost every house had a wireless set, something which the illiterate dekhan of mountain kishlak had never even heard of in the pre-Revolutionary days. And remember that we came down into the Valley of Takhsh with nothing but our bare hands."

Jungles of tall reeds and arid, stony plains—the home

of tiger and wild bear—were converted into cotton-plantations, collective-farms, fruit orchards and pasture lands.

That was how the renaissance of the ancient civilization began

The Valley, watered by the Vakhsh river, one of the ancient parts of Transoxania, famous in history as the land of Bactrians and Sogdians more than fifty huge mounds which mark the site of former citadels around which the Tadjiks fought terrific battles resisting the inroads of invaders—against Mahmud the Ghaznavite, against Timur the Seljou and against Chingis Khan, the Mongol. These mounds have now become the centre of the new life of the nascent Vakhsh Valley

The Tadjik branch of the Academy of Sciences, U S S R. has organised a soil amelioration station at one of the central mounds in the valley where the problems of cultivation, fertilisation and irrigation are studied. A small kishlak, (village), situated near another of these mounds of the past, has grown into the town of Kurgan—Trobe, (Kurgan means a mound, or tumulus) with textile mills, vegetable oil refinery and engineering works. Still another of these mounds is the site of the cotton cultivation experimental station

The valley of the Vakhsh contains a number of small but rapidly growing and flourishing towns—Oktyabrak, Malaklovabad, Voroshilovabad, Kaganovichabad and Mikoyanabad

In less than a quarter of a century, the free Tadjik people, aided by the people of the R.S.F.S.R. (Russian Socialist

ederative Soviet Republic)—biggest of Soviet republics, aided by the scientists of Moscow, Leningrad and other Soviet cities, have raised their own country from the position of a backward colony of Tsarism to a flourishing, industrial, agricultural and cattle-breeding country. Schools, clubs, hospitals, libraries, colleges and technical institutes have appeared and with them ignorance and illiteracy have disappeared.

The Valley of Vakhsh has become one of the main districts in the Soviet Union where long-fibred Egyptian cotton is cultivated. Formerly this valuable material had to be imported from Egypt. After the successful acclimatisation of the Egyptian cotton and other sub-tropical plants, natives of America, Africa, India, Trans-Caucasus and Far East have begun to make their appearance. In Voroshilovabad and Mikoyanabad, sugarcane, jute, rubber-bearing and citrus plants are being successfully cultivated.

The Soviet scientists, evacuated from the various districts in the country which were invaded by the Nazi hordes, are devoting their knowledge to the cause of helping the Tadjik people to make their country still more productive, so that she may provide armaments, equipment and food for the army at the front and food and raw materials for people working in the rear areas.

The Cotton Cultivation Experimental Station in the Vakhsh Valley has produced two new kinds of long-fibred Egyptian type of cotton which give an exceptionally high yield. The scientific workers of the Soil and Amelioration Station of the Tadjik branch of the Academy of Sciences,

U S S R who have been working for many years on the problem of combating the accumulation of salt in the Vakhsh Valley, have this year, installed themselves on two collective-farms where the result of their research is being carried out at the Voroshilovabad station for the acclimatisation of sub-tropical plants. During the last three years this station has provided the collective-farmer of the Vakhsh Valley with 30,000 seedlings of pomegranates and figs, with rubber-bearing plants and sugarcane with which the farmers are laying out new plantations.

Year by year, the persistent work of the Tadjik cultivator, who uses the most up-to-date mechanised farming methods, together with the splendid work of the Tadjik and Russian scientists working in the realm of agriculture, is providing the country with ever-increasing quantities of valuable food and raw materials which had never before been grown within the confines of the Soviet Union.

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From the Valley of Vakhsh to the Soviet-German front was a far cry several thousand miles. The collective-farmers of the Valley, however, never for a moment forgot that victory depended on their self-sacrificing work, as well as on the bravery and heroism of their sons who were fighting in the ranks of the Red Army. The Tadjiks, like all other peoples of the multi-national Soviet Union, fought heroically on the industrial and the agricultural fronts as well as on the battle front.

The people of Tadjikistan sent a letter to the Tadjik soldiers at the front in which they reminded them of the fact that they the Tadjik people—formed a part of the splendéd closely-knit family of the Soviet peoples. In the following words they called on the Tadjik soldiers at the front to fight firmly and stead fastly for their country. On their part they promised to toil relentlessly in their factories and fields.

The friendship and the fraternity ties which bind us to other peoples of the Soviet Union are not mere empty words. Know, then, that every time news reaches us of atrocities committed by the Fascists against Ukrainians, Byelo-Russians, Russians and other peoples of the Soviet Union our blood boils within us and our whole being is filled with burning hatred against the enemy. Your mothers and fathers weep over the sons of these peoples as they do over their own .. ..

“We have a great faith in your staunchness and courage. You will not permit the jack-boot invader to continue trampling under his heels the sacred soil of our native land. You will not permit the savage Fascist brute to enjoy the fruits of our soil. You will not permit the Nazi murderer and violator to continue his atrocities in those districts which he has occupied” .

“Believe us that we, on our part, will permit no relaxation on the labour front. We are toiling and will continue to toil with ever-increasing fervour in order to provide the country and our gallant Red Army with everything required for victory.



## CHAPTER XXXV

# Golden Hands

*By* ELENA KIZNETSOVA

Only twenty years ago, Tadjikistan was a backward land with only a slightly-developed handicraft industry and a population almost entirely illiterate. The women were over their faces black horsehair veils called "paranja" and were dumb slaves of man.

To-day Tadjikistan is a land of up-to-date industry and advanced agriculture. During the ten years from 1928 to 1939, the total production of large-scale industry has multiplied by 39 times.

To-day, all the industry and agriculture of Tadjikistan serve the front.

Tadjikistan has sent its best sons to the fighting ranks, while their place in the industry and on the farms has been taken by women. Two years of the war have seen the number of women engaged in industry increasing twofold. Women are acquiring skill in the difficult trades of men. Many women now work as engineers, technicians, forewomen and leaders of shock brigades. Shoulder to shoulder with men, they had, after the outbreak of war, helped in the complete building of the Gissar irrigation system. They are at present partaking in expediting the construction of the Barzob hydro-station and new railway.

Mastur Avesova is the most popular woman of Tadzhikistan and has been elected the Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Engineer Kahmar Tairova is the head of the republic's Department of Labour Reserves. Tamara, Gafarova, Khamza and Egamberdova are known all over the country as active public workers.

When the housewife, Latif Radjamo, saw that her husband was at the front, she went out to take his place as gold prospector. There are now quite a number of women in Tadzhikistan who are engaged in the gold industry. The women's brigades of gold prospectors, led by Zulfia Kazoyeva and Khamza Gumirova, work successfully in the Kabuta gold-fields.

Darkhha Bekmurzayeva, employed in the Ordjonikidze works, has learnt to do the job of men, and now fulfils her quota by 300 percent.

The front needs bread, so, in 1942-1943, the sowing area in Tadzhikistan has been considerably expanded, collective-farmers run irrigation dams across arid land and break up virgin soil.

The front needs meat and the two years of war have seen horned cattle increase by thirty per cent and sheep and goats by 50 percent.

The front needs cotton and the cotton-growers are gathering record harvests. In the Shakhrynadzk cotton plantations Shirin Piri Mykhamedova and Ruzi Khalimukhamedova are called "golden hands" for, whereas an average cotton harvest on plantation amounts to thirty centners per hectare, these girls have picked 55 centners of the "white gold" as cotton is called.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

# Soviet Azerbaidjan

The Azerbaidjan Soviet Socialist Republic has an area of 860,000 square kilometres and a population of 3,210,000. Its capital is Baku with over 800,000 inhabitants. It lies in the eastern part of Trans-Caucasus and borders on Iran.

The natural wealth of Azerbaidjan, whose history goes back to 3,000 years, was only poorly developed under Tsarism. Baku, with its oilfields, was the only industrial centre in the country. Semi-self-sufficing agricultural economy prevailed in the rest of the country. It embraced cattle grazing, grape growing and silk growing. Cotton growing was in its inception. What irrigation there was, was under the control of a handful of feudal magnates (Beks). Tsarism artificially fanned enmity among the nationalities inhabiting Azerbaidjan, while equally oppressing all their national cultures.

In 1920, the Azerbaidjan people set up the Soviet republic which, later, together with Armenia and Georgia, was affiliated to the U S S R. Soviet rule brought them freedom, independence and economic and cultural progress. The former enmity between the nationalities of Azerbaidjan gave way to close friendship. Over 60 per cent of the population consist of Azerbaidjanese (Tyurks), the rest being made up of Armenians, Russians, Kurds, Tats, Talyshes and Georgians. The Azerbaidjan public embraces the Nakhichevan autonomous republic with Nakhichevan as its capital, and the highland of the Karabakh autonomous

region (capital Stepanakert) with an Armenian population

Almost entirely illiterate and poverty-stricken under the Tsars, the Azerbaidjan people under the Soviet rule have become active, conscious and cultured builders of their free country. Already by 1936 over 99 per cent of population was literate. Some half a million children attend 3,000 schools. Even secondary schools were a rarity before the Revolution, now, besides secondary schools, there are 15 higher education establishments and about a hundred technical colleges. Before the Soviet rule there were only 12 Azerbaidjan engineers, now there are several thousand of them.

In addition, there are over 500 Azerbaidjan professors and scientific workers, the centre of scientific life being the Azerbaidjan branch of the Academy of Sciences, U S S R. The republic has 15 theatres of opera and ballet. The works of Nizami, one of the greatest poets of the world, who lived 800 years ago, and those of other Azerbaidjan classics, have been printed in large editions. New writers, composers and musicians have arisen. Under Tsarism only two newspapers were published in the Azerbaidjan language, to-day, there are about a hundred. Once socially oppressed, the Azerbaidjan women now enjoy full equality with men.

On the outbreak of the war the Baku oilfields were producing 25,000,000 tons per annum, which was three times the output in the first World War. Oil refining industry has been built up. Industries working up agricultural raw materials have expanded considerably.

A similar progress is to be observed in agriculture. The crop area exceeds one million hectares. Numerous irrigation canals have been dug, the largest being the Samur Divichi

canal—107 kilometres long and irrigating 60,000 hectares—which was built in 1940 Azerbaijan is the second largest cotton growing republic in the U. S S R and the largest producer of long staple Egyptian cotton The hill slopes are covered with fruit orchards, vineyards, tobacco plantations and mulberry groves Tea and citrus fruits are now being grown in the Lonkoran lowlands, while to the north, near the Caspian rice is grown on irrigated land Large droves of horses, herds, of cattle and flocks of sheep graze in winter in unirrigated lowlands and, in summer, on mountain pastures Sturgeon, oyster, beluga, herring and sander are fished for in the Caspian where three quarters of the world's supply of black caviare is produced.

The old city, Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan was one of the chief objects of Hitler's ambition in this war, but the red Army's heroic campaign in winter 1942-1943 foiled his plans by driving his armies out of North Caucasus from which he intended to pounce upon Baku

## CHAPTER XXXVI

**Women in Azerbaidjan***By* EHIMNAZ ABLANOVA*(Vice Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities, U S S R)*

Soviet women enjoy equal rights with men and take part on an equal footing with men in political and social life of their country. The radical changes that have taken place in the condition of women are particularly evident in non-Russian republic, such, for example as Azerbaidjan.

Prior to the Revolution not a single woman of Azerbaidjan had higher education. For that matter, even secondary education was something that only a few women, representatives of wealthy sections of the population, received. While the entire people were disfranchised, women were doubly, trebly, so. Barriers between nationalities which the Tsarist regime artificially put up, kept women in the worst isolation. Women in towns, to say nothing of rural districts, Azerbaidjanese women never communed with Russian or Armenians. They were actually under three locks—those of social, national and family isolation.

The Soviet State has liberated women, and the latter have shown their appreciation by widespread participation in social activity which has assumed particularly large proportions in the present war. The petroleum industry, for example was always regarded, a man's affair. To-day however, women are widely represented in the industry and you may find them at, every kind of post—from managers to rank and file operatives. Half of the workers of the Baku petroleum industry are women.

And all nationalities are represented. Azerbaidjanese, Russian and Armenian women usually work in the same brigades. The Azerbaidjanese woman Zinaida Hassainova, teaches Russian girls working under her on the petroleum fields. The Armenian woman Susanna Kocharova, who works as foreman is highly respected by girls of various nationalities working in her brigade.

Women of Azerbaidjan have made an invaluable contribution to our wartime agriculture. Formerly, women were mostly busy in their homes and on their kitchen gardens, taking hardly any part in farming. To-day, however, women represent 75 per cent of the collective farm membership in Azerbaidjan and they do most of the work on the farms. It may be stated without exaggeration that to-day the woman is the central figure of the countryside. Women have given a particularly good account of themselves on cotton fields. About six thousand women of Azerbaidjan have been awarded medal "For the defence of the Caucasus" for heroic work at their jobs in the rear.

Urge for knowledge is a characteristic trait of Soviet girls. In the Industrial College, one of the largest higher educational institutions of Azerbaidjan, over twelve hundred, out of a student body of twenty-two hundred, are girls. In medical and pedagogical colleges women represent 75 per cent of student body.

We have many women scientists. Not so long ago the Azerbaidjanese woman, Dilshad Muganlinkaya, received the degree of Doctor of Biological Sciences. She is the first Azerbaidjanese woman to receive the highest scientific degree. In the countryside women form the backbone of the intelligentsia. In any rural district and large village you will find

women doctors, agronomists and teachers In the village of Vayan, Khanlar district which is remote from the cultural centres, the doctor, a Russian woman, Nina Babkina is on excellent terms with the local Azerbaidjanese population

Scores of thousands of women, mothers and wives of men who have been called to colours, are active socially and helping the Soviet government bodies They see to it that families of men at the front receive proper care They make it their business to provide material aid, when necessary to help find place for a child in the kindergarten or see to it that he or she attends school They perform many other functions of this nature

Soviet women, who have received equal rights with men are keeping place with them in political and social activity, are contributing their full share to their country's war effort



## CHAPTER XXXVIII

# When Guns are Thundering

*By M IBRAMIGOV*

*People's Commission for Education Azerbaidjan*  
*(Deputy of the Supreme Soviet U S S R)*

"In my speech at the recent Session of the Supreme Soviet, U S S R I made reference to an ancient legend which has been preserved among the Azerbaidjan people. It is the story of the death of a foreign monarch who had infringed upon the freedom and happiness of the Azerbaidjan people. After a sanguinary battle which ended in the rout of enemy hordes, Turrus, queen of Azerbaidjan, discovered among the bodies the head of the monarch, who, but an hour ago, had dreamed of world domination. His head was in a pool of blood. Before the eyes of her armies, Tumruz loudly cried "This man thirsted for blood. He slaughtered thousands of people and was not satisfied. Let him drink his own blood in repletion."

Soviet people were exerting all their effort to bring nearer the hour of destruction of Hitler. A prominent part of this Titanic feat was being played by the people of Azerbaidjan who do not spare anything to bring about the rout of the enemy.

Azerbaidjan is a country abundant in oil. It is said that fighting is impossible without oil, and a country which is rich with oil has all the chances of coming out victorious. We may proudly state that, throughout the present war, the Baku oil workers have been incessantly supplying the fighting forces,

war industries and national economy with liquid fuel, and are ready to provide the country as much oil as it needs

The oil industry is the leading but not the only branch of economy in Soviet Azerbaijan. Our industries have rapidly developed in wartime, providing the front with armaments, technical equipment, ammunition and foodstuffs. Tremendous gains have been made in the agriculture of our republic. The Soviet State has recently marked the outstanding services of our agricultural army in decorating 485 Azerbaijan agricultural leaders and farmers with high orders and medals. Collective-farms throughout the republic continued to extend the cultivated areas since the outbreak of the hostilities, and are now delivering more bread to the State than in the pre-war days. The same may be said of cotton, the vast fields of which spread over the face of Azerbaijan.

Considerable progress has been made in livestock. Herds of Azerbaijan Collective-farms have been augmented by some 700,000 head during the war period. This means that the government receives hundreds of thousands of pounds of meat more than in pre-war years.

I hold the post of the People's Commissar of education in our republic. I am well aware of the cultural achievements gained by the Soviet Azerbaijan in the past two odd years of war. All schools of higher learning have been functioning throughout this period, training new cadres and highly qualified experts. Hundreds of engineers, physicians, teachers, chemists, agronomists, literary workers and musicians have graduated from these institutions. In addition several new colleges and institutes were founded in the republic. A new army of young scientists, 120 of whom earned their doctors degree, have sprung up. The scope of education in Azerbaijan

may be illustrated by the fact that 282,000,000 rubles were spent last year for this purpose

There is a saying that when guns are thundering muses are silent. This does not, however, apply to Soviet literature and art. In Azerbaidjan authors and poets have been serving the cause of victory since the very start of the war. Composers created new symphonies, operas and cantatas. Our painters organised five major exhibitions, one of which was shown in Moscow and received the appreciation of the inhabitants of the Soviet capital

The recent Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U S S R demonstrated that the great Soviet power was firmly bound with ties of fraternal friendship of her peoples who withstood all the trials of the unprecedented struggle with the mortal enemy

*The call for defence had been made by the Azerbaidjan people in a letter addressed to its sons at the front* " Our brave warriors ! wherever you may be you are defending your native Azerbaidjan You are defending boundless cottonfields, steppes, lemon and orange groves, the flowering lenkoran vineyards of Kirovabad You are defending our nation which has been regenerated by the Soviet system Do not give the Fascist villains a chance to burn down our splendid cities and villages or wreck the golden monuments of the ancient culture of the great Russian people—our elder brothers Do not give quarter to the enemy Forward our sons ! "



Tashkent, Capital of Soviet Uzbekistan    The textile workers'



## CHAPTER XXXIX

# Collective Farmers of Soviet Azerbaijan

*By Y GIK*

Recently gathered at the convention in Baku, the capital of Soviet Azerbaijan, were more than eight hundred representatives from the leading collective and state farms. One may safely say that the ideas and interests of all the sections among the rural population were reflected here. Present at the convention were many chiefs of collective farms who had distinguished themselves by their remarkable showings during the war. Such a figure was Rustam Askerov, head of the collective farm in the Agdam district. The fields of this farm yielded a remarkable fine harvest. From this enterprise the government received great quantities of grain, cotton and other products over the scheduled deliveries. In addition, the farmers of this collective farm gave unstintingly from their own surplus stocks for the Red Army Fund and for people in the territory liberated from the Germans. The Armenian, Gurgen Shakhian, from the Shaumyan district, Kazan Tatar Mahomed Veliyulin, Director of the Orjonikidze State Farm—the largest of its kind in Azerbaijan—Russian Farm heads and those of many other nationalities attended the conference. Various were the professions represented. Besides rank and file farmers were agronomists, zoologists and farm heads. In all the phases of agriculture the people had delegated their best workers to represent them at the conference.

Before the conference began we spoke to Safer Dzhasarov, People's Commissar of Agriculture, the Azerbaidjan Soviet Socialist Republic. One of the most popular figures in the republic, he is a large, heavy man and, at the first glance, does not give the impression of being an active executive. Strangely enough, however, there is not a single village in Azerbaidjan where he has not been frequently seen. When Dzhasarov arrives at the village he makes a circuit of the fields, no matter how many kilometres they cover. The peasants know him from afar and are always glad to have a talk with their People's Commissar. Thus, often enough when a written statement on one matter or other is presented to Dzhasarov in his office, he has a look at the thing and says

"This is wrong. The Krasny Askar in the Shamlhor district ploughed 720 hectares this year, not sixteen."

And the subsequent checkups invariably prove him to be right.

"What do you expect from the conference?" We asked Dzhasarov.

"Oh, a good deal," he replied. "For one thing, we hear the voice of people. I will talk to those who till fields, take note of their ideas and make them known to everyone. This, at any rate, will go far to secure our success."

The three-day conference justified all the expectations. Through years have the Soviet peasants learnt to formulate their ideas on a nationwide scope and to derive far-reaching conclusions from the experiences gained in their own farms. A case in point was the talk by Zhanmamed Ragimov, head of the Beria Collective Farm in the Shemakhin district. He described the preparations for sowing: how seed was used, how draught animals were worked and so on. No matter how

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many books on agronomy one might have read, his was a far more vivid story which gave his listeners incalculable benefit

Cotton growers and pickers from various districts of the republic met at the conference. Here, too, were grape growers from Apsheron comparing notes with those of Lenkoran. The famous vineyard experts of Kyurdamir had much to say to the young vineyard folk of Apsheron.

The participants at the conference, however, did not limit themselves to sharing opinions and ideas gathered from their experiences. Temur Kuliyev, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, the Azerbaijanian Soviet Socialist Republic, acquainted them with final showing of the republic's agriculture. For example, he told them that, during the Patriotic War, the tilled area of the collective farms had not declined though many farmers had been called to colours. Contrary to this, the area had increased by tens of thousands of hectares. The area under grain too had been greatly increased compared with that before the outbreak of hostilities. During the war bread is of primary importance to the front and the rear. A larger grain harvest is expected in 1944.

With great interest did the collective farmers once more hear details of decisions adopted at the Session of the Supreme Soviet, U. S. S. R., providing for the creation of Republican Commissariats of Defence and Foreign Affairs in the Union Republics.

"More than a hundred young men of our village were called to colours," related Ali Aliyev, Chairman of the collective farm in the Karyagin district. "Though war was a new thing for them, they were all fighting well against the enemy. The organization of special army formations in Azerbaijan undoubtedly makes the Red Army even stronger."



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"A great mark of trust has been shown to us by the government which is now extending to us the right to maintain independent relation with foreign powers," said Medzhid Aliyev, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Taur District Soviet

During the years of the Soviet power Azerbaijan has emerged from the status of an oppressed colony and has become a sovereign state which will now have its say in the international arena

Soon the country will hear again the participants at the conference. They have returned to their farms and promise to achieve new successes and struggle for greater harvests this year.

## CHAPTER XL

## Young Cotton Pickers Of Azerbaijan

By M BABAYEV

The Soviet Government has recently awarded the Order of Lenin to Bagdali Aiev, Chairman of the Dzhaparidze collective-farm of the Karyaginsk district, the Azerbaijan, S S R for his part in great achievements attained by his farm in the severe years of the war. The Dzhaparidze collective farm is the first to plant its fields. It carefully cultivates the land and reaps rich harvests of all kinds of crops. This year the cotton crop was especially good and farmers gathered in nineteen centners per hectare. The Dzhaparidze farm was the first to deliver its quotas to the Government. All its members are well-to-do. Organizational abilities of the young collective farm chairman have developed considerably in wartime and Aiev's name now ranks on a par with those of the foremost agricultural workers of the republic.

Gaikez Nadirova also has been awarded the Order of Lenin. This brigadier of the collective farm in the Agdash district has won renown by her unusual assiduity, love of land and skill in raising fine cotton. Nadirova's brigade made an unprecedented record in gathering 275 centners of cotton—five times of the norm—from five hectares. Gaikez herself is the best cotton picker on the farm. None can catch up with her in speed and dexterity. During the harvesting period, girls of her brigade worked away tirelessly.

Many young people of the Azerbaijan republic were awarded orders and medals for their achievements in supplying

the country and the front with agricultural products. These government awards are high acknowledgment of heroic work of the village youth who are ready to exert all efforts for accelerating victory over the enemy.

In the years of war Azerbaijan became a land of advanced agriculture. The youth has played a great part in the development of collective and state farms and now occupies a prominent place in the agriculture of the republic. Thousands of young people came out in collective and state farm fields in this spring. Their tireless efforts played an important part in considerably increasing the area sown and in the proper cultivation of the land.

Early in spring the village youth actively took to repairing agricultural machines and collecting spare parts.

They were rendered a great aid in this by the city youth which sent brigades of experienced workers to villages to help machine and tractor stations to repair their machines. In this manner a firm friendship grew up between the city and village youth based on their common endeavour to carry out good timely preparations for spring sowing.

The weeding campaign throughout the republic was also carried out successfully. 130,000 young collective farmers, young pioneers and school children partook in it.

When the harvesting season arrived, brigades of young reapers went out in fields and showed examples of discipline and well organized work.

In winter time various courses of study were organized in villages of Azerbaijan. All young collective farmers will go through a course of study in agro-technical circles. Last year 500 young Azerbaijan girls completed three months' courses.

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for collective farm chairman All thoughts and efforts of the village youth of Azerbaijan are directed towards speeding the hour of victory over the hated enemy That is why they are already making such energetic preparations for spring sowing

The youth of Azerbaijan has pledged its word to Stalin to gather even a richer harvest this year and will undoubtedly keep their pledge

## CHAPTER XLI Art and Culture of Azerbaijan

By G. GUSEINOV

The art of Azerbaijan has for itself a worthy place in the cultural wealth of Soviet republics. Having made the most of their rich historical heritage, people of Azerbaijan have promoted arts in every way and, in the trying years of the great Patriotic War, have placed their art at the service of the struggle against Hitler's barbarous hordes.

In recent years the role of the theatre in Azerbaijan has gained in importance. Prior to the advent of Soviet rule the theatre in Azerbaijan was in a sore plight. The existing order of society and age-old superstitions hampered the creative art. It was, for example, forbidden for women to appear on the stage.

With the coming of Soviet power requisite conditions for the growth and development of the Azerbaijan theatre were created. Important national theatres, such as the Azizbekov State Drama and Akhundov Opera Theatre and a whole network of other theatres came into being. At the present time Azerbaijan boasts of 24 theatres.

During war years many important plays have been added to the repertory of Azerbaijan theatres. These plays were written by such outstanding writers as Samed Vurgun, Rasulzade and Suleiman Rustam. Valiant deeds of the fighting men and supreme effort of people on the home front form the theme of the plays.

Over fifty musical compositions have been dedicated to the present war by composers of Azerbaijan. Patriotic songs written by Uzeir Gadzibekov, Stalin Prize Winner, Said Rustamov and other composers have gained wide popularity.

Recent years have seen on Azerbaijan theatres' stage many Russian plays which were translated into the Azerbaijan language. Griboyedov's "Wit Works Woe," Gogol's "Inspector General" are now being translated for State Drama in Azerbaijan. Forthcoming operas at the State Theatre of Opera and Ballet are Moussorgsky's "Boris Godunov", Bizet's "Carmen". Both the operas will be performed in the Azerbaijan language.

Azerbaijani people have shown deep interest in life and art of the Ukraine. During the period of the great Patriotic War this interest has become even keener. The best works of the Ukrainian writers are being translated into Azerbaijani. The Ukrainian musical comedy called "Man from Zaporozhe beyond the Danube" is being rendered into Azerbaijani and will shortly be produced by the Akhundov Theatre.

The contest for the best play and musical composition in honour of 25th anniversary of Soviet Azerbaijan has served as an impetus for making new contributions to dramaturgy and music. A considerable number of plays has already been submitted to judges at Baku.

Some of the republic's most widely known actors are Mirza Aga, Stalin Prize Winner and People's Artist of Azerbaijan and People's Artists of the Republic, Sidqi



Rukullo and Alekperov By their excellent impersonations the actors have won their way into the hearts of Azerbaijan audiences. Important successes have been scored by the republic in the cinema field

Azerbaijan actors have been entertaining fighting men and soldier patients in army hospitals ever since the beginning of the war.

## CHAPTER XLII

# Progress Of Art in War

*By J GIK*

The present war has not interfered with the cultural progress in Azerbaijan. Actually, special animation may be observed there to-day.

Artists of Azerbaijan, many of whom have been and still are at the front, have painted hundreds of canvases reflecting the heroism of Azerbaijanian soldiers at the front and the energetic effort in the rear.

An exhibition of paintings, graphic art, sculpture and ornamental art is scheduled to open in Baku in the near future. Represented at the first section of this exhibition called "Our Country" are mainly landscapes of Azerbaijan, original beauty of its mountain peaks and valleys, the Samur Divichu canal which changed the landscape for many scores of kilometers, ancient Kuba and Baku with its forest derricks.

A special section of the Exhibition is dedicated to Azerbaijan's agriculture and oil. Of interest among the exhibits is Makhmud Tegiyev's picture "Cotton Picking", and "Picking Grapes", a colourful canvas by Sharif Sharifzade.

The "Battle of the Caucasus" is the title of the section which exhibits works of frontline artists. On display in this section are also numerous drawings and cartoons by the late Azim Azimzade, People's Artist of Azerbaijan.

Carpets and rugs occupy a prominent place at the exhibition. Three splendid rugs designed by the talented artist Latif Kerimov reproduce portraits of Lenin and Stalin and the Azerbaijanian statesman Mir Dzhafar Bagirov.

Preparations are at the same time underway for an autumn exhibition to be held in Moscow. It will reflect progress of Azerbaijan art from ancient times to the present period. A prominent place will be devoted to materials obtained as result of excavations, and classical Azerbaijanian miniature rugs, embroidery and ceramics.

Fuad Abdurakhmanov, youthful Azerbaijanian sculptor, is completing his work on monument to the great Azerbaijanian poet, Nizami. 7.5 meters tall, this monument will be mounted on granite pedestal in the city of Kirovabad.

Music circles of Azerbaijan are energetically preparing for festival of Soviet music of Trans-Caucasian republic scheduled to open in Tbilisi in December. Four concerts during the festival will be dedicated to Azerbaijan music. The symphonic concert will include composition by Sultanzade, Gadzhiev, Kara Karayev and others. Chamber music will be represented by Ashraf Abbasovs, cello quartet and other compositions, majority of them written during the present war.

Concerts will also feature song and dance ensemble, academic choir of the Azerbaijan Opera House and Philharmony, folk instruments, orchestra soloists ensemble, solo singers, Byulbul, Shevket Mamedova, ballerina (ballet dancer) Almas Zade and other artists. Youthful composers will likewise be represented at the festival. They will include

women composers Agabadzhi Ruzayova, Shafiga Akhundova and others

Music circles are awaiting with great interest the new cantata now being written by Uzeir Gadzhibekov, oldest composer of Soviet Azerbaijan and Stalin Prize Winner

Autumn ushered in a new theatrical season in Baku and in district centres of the republic. An important event in the republic's cultural life was the recent opening of its first theatrical institute with departments for regisseurs, histrionic scholars and actors.

Plays by Ostrovsky, Griboyedov, Gogol, Chekhov and other Russian classics are now being translated to acquaint Azerbaijan audiences with masterpieces of Russian dramatic art. For the first time Azerbaijan's district theatres will stage Gogol's "Inspector General", Ostrovsky's "Forest", Gorky's "Yegor Bulychev" and other world famous works of Russian playwrights.

### Excavating ancient settlement

The Azerbaijan Government has granted a considerable sum of money for urgent archaeological excavation work at the site of the ancient settlement of Kabala, believed to have been the capital of the ancient state of Albania (Arran). Kabala was mentioned by Strabo and Ptolemy almost two thousand years ago. The town was sacked by Tamerlane's hordes and never recovered. The archaeologists of Azerbaijan discovered the ancient town in the north of the present day Azerbaijan.

Historians are eagerly awaiting results of the excavations. Hopes are entertained that specimens will be unearthed in Albanian writing hitherto unknown, reference to which is made by ancient authors.

## CHAPTER XLIII

# "Samed Vurgun" Azerbaijan's Noted Poet

By PYOTR SKOSIREV

*(Secretary of the Presidium of the Union of Soviet Writers)*

If one wishes to know the history of Azerbaijan, one should read its poets. For many centuries Azerbaijan fought for its independence against foreign conquest, and Azerbaijan's poets struggled for the right of their people to write and think in their own language. Nizami, Azerbaijan's outstanding poet of the 12th century, roused his people, by his flaming verses, to struggle for the independence of the land. In the 14th century another poet, Nasimi was skinned alive in an unequal contest for the freedom of Azerbaijan. Bagif, a poet of the 18th century, also perished in battle for his country. The Azerbaijan poets are the nation's heroes. "*Being a poet means being a hero*" is an old and popular saying in Azerbaijan.

To-day Samed Vurgun, one of Soviet Azerbaijan's outstanding poets, continues the traditions of Azerbaijan's militant classic poets. His first historic drama in verse, which was honoured by the government in 1941 with the Stalin Award, brings to the fore the life and struggle of the classic poet, Vagif.

The Soviet poet, Samed Vurgun, now 36 years old, lives in a free land with blossoming roads open for all nationalities

Vurgun lives up to the behest of the poets of old, to whom to be a poet meant to fight daily and hourly for the happiness of people and to cherish dearly treasures of national talent

In the course of 16 years of writing, Samed Vurgun has been very prolific. In his first volume of collected poems entitled 'The Lantern', in his following works, "Book of the Heart", in his long poems "Caucasus", "The tale of the Farm-woman Bastya" and others we find modern images intermingled with the figures of the past. In the "Tale of the Farm-woman Bastya", a part of the poem is devoted to the history of the country in order to help the reader to a more vivid and comprehensive appreciation of the central figure of poem—the modern Soviet woman—a member of the collective-farm. In Azerbaijan's national hymn, for which Vurgun has written words, we find themes drawn from the great lyricists of the past, Nasimi and Fizuli, (of the 16th century)

This blending of the past and the present in Vurgun's poetry makes the picture of prospering modern Azerbaijan more outstanding and significant. In the traditional language of the poetry of the east, Samed Vurgun speaks of the innermost thoughts and aspirations of men and women of his country. When the Fascists attacked the Soviet Union, Samed Vurgun directed all his poignant gift against those who threatened the happiness of the many nationalities which had begun to lead a new and happy life in Soviet Russia.

One of the best historical plays of Samed Vurgun, "Farkahad and Shirin", was begun before the war, and published sometime after the Germans attacked the Soviet Union. It draws its theme from an old legend which has inspired many poets before him. At the first glance this play, which tells the story of the love of Farkahad for the princess of Armenia, Shirin, seems as very far removed from the press-

ing questions of the day, yet the play is permeated with such a strong love for the fatherland, such a hatred for oppression, injustice and slavery, and such a confidence in victory of the right over the wrong, that many of the scenes come as a bugle call for the struggle against Fascism, and sound triumphant notes of the forthcoming victory

For this play Samed Vurgun was, for the second time, awarded the Stalin Prize in 1942

## CHAPTER XLIV

# Soviet Turkmenia

Bordering on Iran and Afghanistan, and stretching from the Caspian Sea to Amudarya river, Soviet Turkmenia spreads over a territory of 443,600 square kilometers of which four-fifths are taken up by the Karakum (black sand) desert. In the latter years Soviet explorers discovered the desert rich with underground and surface waters and pastures well able to feed five million head cattle. Turkmenia has a million and a quarter inhabitants, and its capital is Ashkabad.

A backward country under the Tsarist regime, its people were chiefly engaged in raising cotton near oases, tending sheep and camel breeding in desert.

After the Turkmenians, with the assistance of the Russians, formed the Union of Soviet Republic, Turkmenia began to travel uphill at a rapid pace. Apart from Turkmenians, who form the bulk of the population, Russians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Beludji and Iranians reside in Turkmenia. To-day, Turkmenia is proud of the fact that her valiant sons defended the freedom and independence of the mother country.

Turkmenia's peasants have organised collective-farms and were provided with tractors, combines and seeds by the Soviet Government, as well as finances for the irrigation system. The Turkmenian intellectual class is rising to the fore. Whereas in the Tsarist times, there were only three native agriculturists



in the whole of Turkmenia, now there are 1500. In 1939 the annual income of eight hundred collective-farms exceeded one million rubles. Radio, telephone, cinema houses and library became a part of the village scene. New irrigation dams have been built and are bringing about considerable expansion in cotton plantations, particularly of Turkmenia's famed Egyptian variety, as well as vineyards and orchards. Agriculture has penetrated even into the Karakum desert.

Over two million head cattle graze in pastures in desert and foothills where 'caracul' sheep, strong fleet-footed horses and large-horned cattle are raised.

Cotton ginning plants, textile factories, silk spinning mills, large meatpacking plant and boot factory have sprung up in the recent years. Mining has developed extensively, and fishing along the shores of Caspian Sea, the home of "black caviare," has become an important industry. In 1937 the production of Turkmenia's industry grew seven and a half of that in 1913.

The Soviet system has not only put new blood into the economic life of Soviet Turkmenia, but led people to prosperity and enlightenment. In twelve years upto 1939 the population increased by 25 per cent. 1400 schools, conducted in the languages of the various peoples inhabiting Turkmenia, have been opened, as well as 33 colleges and four universities. Both men and women of Turkmenia are given every opportunity of higher education. Sixty newspapers are published in the republic, forty of which appear in the Turkmenian language.

Also, seven magazines and numerous books are pub-

lished in millions of copies annually Thirty scientific institutions, headed by the Turkmenian branch of the Academy of Sciences U.S.S.R., conduct research in the republic There are 37 theatres, 700 libraries, 600 clubhouses Due homage is being paid to Turkmenia's cultural heritage. Within the past years many poets, writers and artists have come to the fore in this once dark and obscure land

Ashkhabad, Turkmenia's capital, has been converted into a thriving cultural and manufacturing centre with its own colleges, theatres, beautiful parks and speckless wide avenues, rimmed by tall modern buildings.

## CHAPTER XLV

# Our People

By A SENNIKOV

*(Assistant Chairman of Council of People's Commissars,  
Turkmenian S S R.)*

In connection with the twentieth anniversary of the existence of the Turkmenian S S R the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, U S S.R., recently awarded orders and medals to some five hundred people, men and women collective farmers, agricultural and local industrial workers and representatives of the intelligentsia belonging to the republic for achievements in the development of its agriculture, local industry, and art.

Those decorated, in addition to leaders of the republic, of some of her regions and districts, were many rank and file Soviet people who in the grim days of the war strained every effort to help the brilliant advances of the Red Army. Who are these people who were honoured so highly by the government? Let us cite a few. Bolgan Kuljarov is forty-six years old and is chairman of the Andreyev Collective Farm in the Geo Tepin district. This collective farm prides itself on its splendid vineyards and fruit orchards which yield a large income to collective farmers. The farm cultivates 120 acres of local varieties of grapes "Kara Uzun" and "Ter Bash". The distinguishing quality of these varieties is their high sugar

content, reaching thirty-five per cent This year the collective farm gathered upto five tons grapes from each acre and most of this crop was sold to the Bezman winery for manufacture of desert wines Besides grapes this collective farm is known for its fine "Bairabab" apples At one time Michurin, great Russian horticulturist, was very much interested in some of the peculiarities of this variety and transplanted several apple trees to his orchard in the city of Kozlov (now Michurinsk) The collective farm also has large livestock farm and good grain crops

In the six years that Bolgan Kuljarov has been the chairman of the collective farm its yield and income have grown from year to year grape crop has increased from three to five tons per acre—an income from 1,156,000 to 2,134,000 rubles Bolgan Kuljarov was decorated with Order of Lenin, the highest award

Then there is Kaip Makhtumov, Chairman of the "Dvenadzat Let Krasnot Armii" collective farm in the Ashkhabad district Besides the luscious variety of grapes, this collective farm is known for its pedigreed race horses which are reared on collective studfarms The race horses bred here are entered annually in spring and autumn races at republican contest in the city of Ashkhabad and they invariably carry off the highest prizes During the war the collective farm has supplied officers of the Red Army with many cavalry horses. In 1944, Kaip Makhtumov contributed to the republican hippodrome fifty thousand rubles out of his personal savings for construction of an aeroplane for the Red Army for which he

received Stalin's appreciation. Kaip Makhtumov was also awarded Order of Lenin.

Anna Meredova Ak Nabat is twenty-nine years old. Before the war she worked as ordinary field hand on the Kaganovich collective farm in the Mary district.

Her husband worked together with her as leader of the collective farm team. When her husband left for the front in 1942 Ak Nabat took his place at the head of the team which had sown twenty-five acres of longstaple cotton. Throughout the war-years her team overfulfilled the plan for cotton picking. In 1944 they picked 172 tons of cotton against ten tons per schedule. Anna Meredova Ak Nabat was awarded medal "For Labour Valour".

One of the other decorated women is Akmamedova Ganysh. She works on the "Socialism" collective farm in the Turkmenkalin district. She is thirty-two years old now, from early childhood she had helped her mother to breed silkworms; the collective farm, therefore, elected her leader of silkworm breeding brigade. In recent years Ganysh and her team advanced the yield of silkworm cocoons to 75.5 kilograms per box of fertilized eggs against forty kilograms per schedule. She says that each kilogram of silk above the schedule is her contribution to the war effort. Akmamedova Ganysh received medal "For Labour Valour".

These people give their all to supply the front and the country with more bread and the industry with more raw materials. In exceeding the set plans each of them produce additional commodities. There are thousands of such people.

and the net amount contributed is staggering. Suffice it to say that the cotton yield of the republic this year is double that of the last year.

The Soviet Government rewards not only those who distinguish themselves at war fronts but also those who reach high targets of production on labour front in the rear ; some of them are most ordinary people who understand that intensive efforts of workers help the Red Army to successfully exterminate the enemy. Modest plain people are rewarded in the Soviet Union with highest government awards. There is no doubt that these government decorations will spur on workers to attain still greater labour achievements.

## CHAPTER XLVI

# In The Land of Sand

By I POMELOV

To the east of the Caspian Sea, bordering on Iran and Afghanistan, lies *Turkmenia*, one of the Soviet Republics which may well be termed the "Land of Sand", as ninety-five per cent of its area could not be called anything else but desert

Over part of *Turkmenia's* territory stretches the famous Kara-Kum Desert. In speaking of it a century ago, Lieutenant Berris, of the East India Company, had said that the Indian deserts were nothing compared to the Kara-Kum, which is "a boundless ocean of sand, terrible to behold." And, true enough, for long centuries *Turkmenia's* deserts repelled settlers, rousing in them superstitious fear.

To day, however, the desert has been found to contain rich mineral deposits and part of it has been turned into vast pasture lands for cattle to graze.

In the spring of 1941, when I had occasion to take an automobile trip through *Turkmenia*, I found apricot trees in full blossom in the Kara-Kum Desert. Here also sheep and goats grazed and there was a steady movement of heavily laden caravans, as well as a good deal of automobile traffic.

Ancient oases like the Ped-jak, Murgaba and the Amu-Darys, separated by the Kara-Kum sands, are situated in the

south eastern part of Turkmenia. There are fertile lands around them, and ample light and sun for vegetation, but not enough water. Thus, to cultivate the land, it was necessary to irrigate it. However, it was only recently that an adequate irrigation system was erected here with assistance rendered to the Turkmenian people by the Soviet Government. Hundreds of Millions of roubles were allocated by the Government for the construction of dams and canals in Turkmenia. The building of only one dam on the Murgab River had run into five million roubles. Besides this, the Government has helped the Republic by providing it with modern machinery, materials and irrigation building experts. This resulted in an expansion and reconstruction of the Republic's entire irrigation system which to day, extends over many thousand kilometres. By these means rational utilisation of land and water in the Republic has been achieved and the area under cultivation enlarged, greatly diminishing the desert area.

After the erection of the irrigation system, agriculture in the Republic began to develop by leaps and bounds. The acreage of the cotton plantations, the main crop of the Republic, had expanded in 1940 to two-and a-half times their size in 1913, whereas the yield per acre doubled. The cultivation of grain, rice, water-melons, cantelopes, lucerne, sesame has been renewed and many vineyards and orchards appeared in recent years.

It is however, cattle-breeding, cotton-growing and sericulture that have shown particularly marked development. Cotton,



caracul, meat and silk are the principal products with which Turkmenia supplies the Soviet Union.

During the war agriculture in Turkmenia has scored several significant successes. In 1943, Turkmenia's collective farms have expanded their planting acreage by little over 40,000 hectares. One and a half times as much grain has been sown as in the last pre-war year. Collective farms record a considerable increase of livestock. In 1942 goat herds increased by 300,000 heads.

These tremendous advances in agriculture have made it possible for Turkmenia to augment its deliveries to the Red Army, as well as to the urban population. Turkmenia has also been able to supply industry with greater quantities of raw materials such as cotton, silk and various

It was through intense effort and wide enterprise that the collective farmers have succeeded in expanding cattle-breeding and the raising of crops. The increase of the acreage under cultivation was made possible by the new irrigation system. Despite the fact that the majority of the menfolk are at the battlelines, still the farmers have built and are building to-day new irrigation systems. Among the large irrigation systems under construction are the Sovet-Jab, Klych-bai, Bassaga-Sakinsky Uzboi canals.

When the existing pastures could no longer accommodate the growing herds and there was a great demand for water, Soviet scientists undertook a close study of the desert. They discovered water in places which until recent times were regarded as absolutely dry.

Eight years ago wells were dug in these parts and already in 1937 nearly 100,000 sheep belonging to collective farms grazed here. Since the beginning of the war many new wells were dug and large herds transferred to this part of the Kara-Kum Desert.

The desert to-day is being studied more carefully than ever with a view to making it serve agriculture. To make the land yield bounteous harvests with the least possible expenditure of water is a major problem now being solved by Soviet agricultural experts in Turkmenia. Good results have been obtained from the very start.

According to approximate estimates, the Kara-Kum Desert should provide pastures for five million heads of cattle. This is what the Turkmenian people have set themselves out to achieve.

## CHAPTER XLVII

**Turkmenian Scientists at Work***By P. IVANOV*

With thirty six research expeditions to various parts of the republic included in its 1944 programme, the Turkmenian branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences is continuing the fruitful work which it has been carrying out since its foundation in 1941. Expeditions comprising geologists, hydrogeologists, livestock and plant experts will spend several months in the Kopetdaga mountains, Karakum desert, Murgab valley and other places studying their natural wealth and promoting its development.

A prominent place is given in the work of the branch to research aimed at facilitating exploitation of local raw materials for industry. Thanks to its efforts suitable clays for the manufacture of fireproof bricks are brought to light to compensate for those that, before the war had been shipped in from Belorussia and the Ukraine. Mineral dyes that used to come from other parts of the country have also been discovered in the republic.

This year the Turkmenian scientists are continuing their aid in the industrial development of Karakum desert by planting greenery Belts there and by studying its water resources.

Research on ways and means of improving utilisation of organic fertilizers goes hand in hand with oil study. Good results have been obtained in preparing bacterial fertilizers, phosphorus, nitrogen and potassium for the manufacture of mineral fertilizers have been found in the republic.

Zootechnicians and cross-breeding livestock to obtain long-haired hardy goats and cattle with high meat productivity. Interesting work is being done on Karacul sheep to improve the quality of fur.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### Life in the Desert

By J ULITSKY

The sun-beaten Turkmenian republic in Central Asia contains the great desert of Kara-Kum or 'black sands' as the people call it. These wastes were always regarded unfit for human habitation. Lack of water seemed to proscribe all manner of life.

Scientific research, however, has established the fact that life is possible in this desert. For a long time Soviet agronomists, working at their various scientific stations, have been seeking for means and ways of exploiting these arid wastes. They discovered plant life that could grow here and developed a method of desert agriculture. The largest Kara-Kum station at Repetek is now surrounded by green meadows where sheep, cows and camels graze.

Though there is water in the Kara-Kum it may be found only at great depths. Thus, some of the wells at Repetek are 250 meters deep. Practical exploitation of the Kara-Kum was begun during the war against the German fascist invaders.

An expedition of the Academy of Sciences for research in the Kara-Kum recently completed its work. This expedition included 60 science workers of various professions—geologists, hydrotechnicians, agronomists, botanists, zoologists and others.

During the two years of their researches these people covered an enormous space of the desert—35,000,000 hectares or a territory a little smaller than France, but larger than Italy. A thorough study was made of the desert's soil, its flora and fauna and first and foremost its water resources. An important part of the job of charting its underground streams has been completed. Having determined which districts are suitable for future pasture lands and which for 'cultivation, the expedition also defined the sections to be drilled for water and the drilling of wells for practical use shall begin in January. The experience gained by the Repetek station is being applied in other districts as well and ever greater sections of arable land are being wrested from the desert.

Scientific research of the desert has been completed and now the work of exploitation begins. Lifeless sands which hitherto held nothing but the bones of animals and men who perished here shall soon be transformed into pasture and armlands.

## CHAPTER XLIX

### Soviet Kirghizia

Soviet Kirghizia, with a population of nearly one and a million, spreads over an area of 197,00 square kilometers. It is situated in the eastern part of Soviet Central Asia bordering on western China. Frunze, the capital of the republic, has 93,000 inhabitants.

Kirghizia was one of the most backward of provinces in Tsarist Russia. Its people, ousted from irrigated mountain valleys, led a nomad life moving with their herds, felt tents and household utensils, from place to place. Cattle-grazing was their main occupation. Agriculture was in a very primitive state, there being hardly any implements with which to till small strips of land. With the exception of a few handicraft shops and a scant sprinkling of mines, there was not the least evidence of industry in the country.

The Kirghiz people were actually on the verge of extinction, their number having dwindled by ten percent in the decade preceding the first World War. The low level of their culture may be judged by the fact that 98 percent of the population was illiterate. In all the schools of Kirghizia, including Russian schools, 7,000 children were in attendance.

With the advent of the Soviet power came the rebirth of the Kirghiz people who received their national autonomy and

set up the Soviet autonomous republic in 1924 which, in 1936, became a Union republic. Two-thirds of Kirghizia's inhabitants are Kirghiz, and the rest are Russian, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Uigur and Dungan.

In the course of 12 years preceding the last census in 1939, the population of Kirghizia showed an increase of 45 percent, whereas] in 1939 already 70 percent of the population could read and write. It was during this period that written Kirghiz language was introduced. The number of schools in comparison with the Tsarist times was multiplied by 17 times, there are at present nearly 2,000 schools in Kirghizia and the number of pupils is 300,000. In high schools there are 170 times as many students as before the first World War. Five higher technical colleges have been founded in the republic.

Scores of public libraries and clubs have been opened in all the parts of Kirghizia. Its folklore, such as the epic poem, "Manas" has been given its rightful place. New Soviet literature has come of age in the republic, and numerous newspapers and magazines are being issued. The establishment of 17 new theatres as well as the first Kirghiz opera is further proof of the cultural upsurge in the republic. Scientific research activities have developed around the Kirghiz affiliated branch of the Academy of Sciences, U.S.S.R.

The way of life of the Kirghiz people has likewise undergone a deep-rooted change, Kirghiz women have gained their emancipation and, with the help of the Soviet Government, the Kirghiz shepherd folk have settled on the land. On the

mountains and foothills of Tyanshan, settlements of former nomads, the modern standard of living came into being Kirghiz peasants united into collective-farms, and were provided with tractors, combines and other machinery by the Soviet State

To day, cattle-breeding has come into its own in Kirghizia which has over three million horses, large horned cattle, sheep and goats To what extent agriculture has expanded in the republic may be seen from the following facts—already in 1937 over one million hectares were under cultivation, that is, 63 percent more than in the Tsarist times, four times more technical crops have been raised at the valley adjoining the mountain slopes and powerful irrigation canals have been erected Recent years have witnessed the addition of 300,000 hectares to the area under irrigation

The food industry, particularly meat-packing and sugar-refining is rapidly growing in Kirghizia The textile industry has developed, as to mining, Kirghizia is supplying all Central Asia with her coal Kirghiz towns have changed beyond recognition, particularly Frunze—named after the outstanding Soviet general who was born here From a dusty provincial small town Frunze has grown into an important economic and cultural centre with paved streets, and fine esplanades bordered by poplars and oaks and comely modern buildings.



## CHAPTER L

**Hail ! Kirghizian Patriots***By* MOLDOGAZI TOKOBYEV*(Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Kirghizia)*

The days of the Great Patriotic War found Soviet Kirghizia sending her best sons to the front, as well as the finest production of its industries, its fields and mines.

Day by day this aid increased in magnitude. The production of armaments and munitions had gone up three and a half times as compared with 1942, the extraction of rare and non-ferrous metals two and a half times while the meat and milk products output had been doubled. Likewise, the republic augmented its production of solid and liquid fuel, leather goods and textiles.

The republic's expenditures in the field of industrial building during the three years of war are equal to the money invested in two five year plans. Over thirty large plants and mines have been built, including evacuated plants. The Voroshilov Power Station, the largest in the republic, was launched during the war. Bright prospects for developing the natural resources of the Issyk-kul and Tian-Shan regions are promised by the completion of the Kant-Rybachye railroad. Five power stations, now being erected, will double the power supply of the republic and promote the further intensive development of industry.

Kirghizia's collective farmers were as sincere in their efforts for the front as the industrial workers. During the Great Patriotic War the collective and state farms of Kirghizia have expanded their acreage by 350,000 acres. The building of irrigation dams continued all through the war. Land that was barren for centuries has been made arable. In the past three years the area under irrigation has been expanded by 100,000 acres.

The war period has seen the number of cattle in Kirghizia increase by 1,183 head. Kirghizia is now supplying the country with tens of thousands of tons of bread, meat, vegetables, potatoes, fruits, milk and wool in greater quantities than before the war.

In their aid to the front the people of Kirghizia showed the widest initiative. In answer to the call of Ferapont Golovaty, a Russian peasant, the citizens of Kirghizia have donated over 215 million rubles for the building of armaments for the Red Army and have dispatched over 550,000 articles of warm clothing, three thousand tons of various products and 200,000 private packages to the fighting men. Kirghizia's contribution to Government war loans amounts to 772,000,000 rubles.

Servicemen's families in Kirghizia enjoy wide solicitude. Apart from the state allowances, the citizens of Kirghizia have contributed to funds for servicemen's families over ten million rubles, thousands of tons of food products and 90,000 articles of war clothing and household utensils in one year alone. With the aid of the collective farms, state offices and industrial enterprises, servicemen's families have planted about 42,000 acres of victory gardens, received 560,000 cubic meters of firewood and have been provided with 14,589 new flats. Thousands of chil-

dren whose fathers are at front are being brought up in special homes, nurseries and kindergartens, many enjoy sanatorium facilities.

Alongside the economic growth of the republic, we witness the flourishing of science, culture and art in Kirghizia. Problem bearing on the advance of industry and agriculture of the Republic are being elaborated at thirty scientific research institutes, experimental stations and laboratories. Recently an affiliated branch of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, which is to be the centre of scientific thought in the republic, has been opened.

Nor have Kirghiz poets, writers, actors, minstrels and composers stood aloof from the republic's gigantic war effort. Several volumes of poetry, a number of novels, 20 plays, operas and ballets running in Frunze, the capital of the republic, and in outlying towns, many songs and symphonies—all inspired by deep patriotic sentiments, have appeared in Kirghizia since the beginning of the war. At a recent festival of Central Asian Art held in Tashkent, Kirghizia made a spectacular showing.

Special entertainment brigades of actors from Kirghizia are constantly touring the frontlines. Their number of performances at the forward positions runs as high as 2,000. At the same time the republic's performers buoy up the spirits of those working for victory on the home front. In the last two years they gave 3,000 shows on construction jobs, in mines, plants, in the alpine pastures and collective farm fields of the republic,

## CHAPTER LI

# The Cow Herdess

By N BABIN

"Driving cattle is not a woman's job" aged Kirghizians declared, claiming that this profession required stamina, physical strength and a certain amount of knowledge

The war broke out and a majority of cowherds joined the fighting forces Their places were taken by their wives, sisters and daughters

In Soviet Kirghizia to-day there are more than a thousand women tending herds and making a good job of it Among them is Toibuba Beyetova, a tall broad-shouldered woman of thirty-four, of a dark complexion with pearly white teeth and black pigtailed intertwined with silver coin chains She rides on saddle like any cowboy and is skilful with kamcha, long leather twisted whip

Apple and apricot trees are in full blossom in the Kirghiz valleys Here, however, in Tian Shan range dolon mountain pass, some four thousand meters above sea level is covered with deep snow A large herd of nearly a thousand head cattle slowly making its way through blizzard swept pass Riders urging on animals who have fallen behind and are keeping a watchful eye on a pack of oxen carrying food, tents and other camping equipment Riders are so muffled up that it is hard to deter-

mine their sex and age. Only when they cry out to one another do we guess that a majority of them are women.

At the head of the herd rides Toibuba Beyetova who, with fifteen assistants, is driving herd from the remote district of Kirghizia to Frunze, the capital of the republic - a difficult and dangerous journey of four hundred and twenty kilometers across mountains. Not many herdsmen accomplish this trip without loss of livestock, but Toibuba Beyetova has earned the fame throughout the republic as an outstanding cowherdess. This is the fifth time that she is driving her herd from Tian Shan to Frunze and has not lost a single cow or sheep on the way.

A blizzard swooped down unexpectedly, but Toibuba Beyetova has a keen eyesight and safely leads the herd through dolon. The herd later is brought safely at stockyards in Frunze. Herd's cattle and flocks of sheep arrive here from all parts of the republic, and Frunze meatpacking plants ship thousand carcasses, tons of sausage and millions of cans of tinned meat to west where Red Army is carrying on victoriously.

## CHAPTER LII

**Aptap Sultanova—the Shepherdess***By* ALEXANDER FOMICHEVA

At the beginning of the war Aptap Sultanova saw her husband off to the front. He had been superintendent of a sheep raising farm. And very few menfolk had remained in the Anadjar village in the Altai district of the Kirghiz Republic. Almost all of them have gone to defend their country from the enemy. And their work had to be done by women.

In the sheep raising farm Aptap prepared food for shepherds and tended sheep and lambs. She had her own way of doing things and introduced improvements everywhere. Old Zulpa Alymkulov, head of the shepherds greatly admired the young woman's work. He was getting old—this Zulpa Alymkulov—his eyes had grown dim and his hands and feet were rather shaky. But there was more work to do than ever. And Aptap seemed to manage it beautifully.

In the spring sheep-pens had needed repairs to keep out wind and rain. And spring in Kirghizia is a capricious season. A bright sunny day may be followed by rain and snowstorms. What would happen then to newborn lambs? There were 2,000 sheep in the farm and soon there will be a good deal more. This meant fats and wool for the Red Army. And Aptap displayed great initiative and good sense. She got some other workers to help her and together they brought five

large tents from the village and then they got busy in putting up a good supply of firewood. They had hardly finished their preparations when the rainy weather set in. Aptap and younger shepherds transferred new born lambs and their mothers to tents. For nine days there was heavy rain mixed with snow and followed by frost.

But it was warm in the tents and lambs thrived. No one was lost.

Aptap's efforts were highly appreciated and she soon became well-known throughout the neighbourhood. Shortly afterwards she was put in charge of the sheepfarm. Yes, she was handling her husband's job well while he was fighting the Germans.

As time went on the farm made preparations to move to summer pastures. These were located high up in the mountains far from the village. The animals and their young ones had to cover 100 kilometres along the mountain paths. Aptap made careful arrangements for the journey. The Turkmenian sheepdogs guarded her against beasts of prey and kept stragglers from wandering away. Tents, other necessities and supplies were carried on horse back. After several days they stopped in the picturesque valley with excellent pastures. Shepherds pitched their camp at the foot of the mountain.

Aptap too settled down and managed things. From time to time she would go back to the farm where her mother lived with her seven-year-old daughter Sabira. The young woman easily covered the distance on her spirited horse. As she descended the slopes of the mountains, she would sing her

favourite song wherein the hero, her husband Elimbek, gallantly defended his country

When grass grew in its tall and fragrant valley, Aptap said to the shepherds

“ The horses of the Red Army are heavily taxed    Our men on their mounts are driving the German dogs from our land. Horses need fragrant hay, it will give them strength Let us cut hay and take it to the foot of mountains There we can send it to the front by railway ”

The shepherds agreed and, after their own work was done, they cut the hay, dried it and took it to the station of Sarytash They sent ten tons of hay to the front

With the coming of autumn the shepherds struck the camp and returned to the farm. Here awaited them a great surprise There was a new building for sheep and a new hayshed. Now they knew why Aptap had made those trips She had been directing the building of these new structures in the farm The herd had increased during the summer and lambs were big and fat Due to her excellent management not a single animal had been lost in the mountains. The number of head of sheep had gone up by 27 percent above the plan Aptap proposed that this excess be turned over to the Red Army for meat Her proposal was accepted



## CHAPTER LIII

# Nomads of Yesterday !

By C SOLONITSYN

"Ak Kalpak" is more than a headgear to the Kirghizian it is the symbol of his national dignity, military valour and mark of deep respect for his glorious ancestors. That is why Ibrai Achikejev, who wears national white cap with black rim, is looked upon with such respect.

"He is a real Kirghiz" people say "for he respects the memory of his forefathers and he is worthy of them."

I recently met Ibrai Achikejev in the electro-plating shop of a tool factory in Frunze. The factory whistle was just sounded for the dinner when I saw a tall, old man with black, slightly squinting eyes enter the shop. He moved cautiously over the smooth tile floor and I gained the impression that he was farmer from some outlying village. My interest aroused, I watched him approach a young slender girl, one of workers in the shop. I came closer expecting to hear the story about affairs on the farms, but the old man merely asked the girl to come for lunch with him.

My impression was completely mistaken. Ibrai Achikejev was one of the workers of the factory. At my request he readily-told me how he had come to work there.

None of his forebears ever worked in the factory. His father, grandfather and great grand father were all nomad herdsmen wandering in mountains around blue Issyk-Kul. Ibrai, too, spent most of his sixty summers tending herds in

mountain pastures. He came to Frunze a year ago and this is how it happened

A group of young people was preparing to Frunze and the man in authority was required to accompany them to their new place of residence, to help them adjust themselves in new surroundings and learn trades never known to their fathers. This honourable mission was entrusted to Ibrai Achikeyev.

When youngsters were comfortably settled Ibrai Achikeyev found time hanging on his hands. Despite his venerable age he did not like to be idle, and at his request the factory management agreed to give him opportunity to learn trade. Under the guidance of experienced workers the old man developed into a good fitter and was enrolled in the team of repair mechanics. He was very proud at being able to handle clever machines. And he was the first of his tribe to learn.

Achikeyev decided to bring his wife and daughter to the city seeing that there was plenty of work for all of them. His daughter went to work in the same factory, and after serving her term as apprentice, became an efficient chromium plater.

## CHAPTER LIV

**The Epic of the Kirghizian People***By* UMARKUL JAKISHEV*(Chairman of the Committee of Arts of the Kirghizian People)*

The Institute of the History, Language and Literature of the Kirghizian Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the U S S. R. is working on the collection, study and publication of 'Manas', the heroic epic of the Kirghizian people.

"Manas" is one of the most remarkable memorials of oral folklore of creative art of the people. For the profundity of its content, for the force, vividness and distinguishing national features of its images, it may rank with such great works of human genius as the "Iliad", the "Odyssey", "The Ballad of Igor's Regiment", "The Knight in the Tiger's Skin" and "Kalevallo". "Manas" also resembles these works by the historical range of the events described by its monumental plot, by the legendary heroism of its characters and the deep insight into the life and customs of the Kirghizian people.

The work is divided in three parts "Manas", "Semeter" and "Seitek," which, as has now been established, contain nearly half a million lines of verse. To recite this version from beginning to end would require several months. And yet "Manas" has been preserved in the memory of the people for almost an entire millennium. Prior to the October Revolution the work had never been recorded on paper with the exception of a few brief fragments written down in the 19th century by two orientalists Academician Radlov and Chokan Valikhanov.

Ages passed. Entire tribes and Khanates were wiped out in battles. In their nomad life the Kirghizian people lost some of their national culture, pictorial art withered away, even their written language disappeared. But "Manas," transmitted by word of mouth from generation to generation, has been preserved.

Such an exceptionally loving and careful attitude towards their epic cannot be explained merely by the poetical gifts of the Kirghizian people, who have been called a nation of singers. The immortality of "Manas" is to be explained by the outstanding role it has played and is playing in the history, life and habits of the Kirghizian people.

"Manas" is a collective work of creative art by many generations of bards and minstrels. Each bard has introduced something new in it, some new episodes drawn from contemporary events. The result was that as time went on, "Manas" has turned into a sort of encyclopedia of the poetical, ethnographical and political ideas of the people.

Having now at our disposal records of almost all the versions current among the people, records taken straight from the mouths of various bards, we may confidently declare that "Manas" is not only one of the greatest literary and historical memorials, but that it may rightly be called the annals of the Kirghizian people.

Therein lies the chief significance of the epic. In view of the almost complete absence of memorials of material culture and of authentic historical documents relating to the past of the Kirghizian people, "Manas" is a great poem that serves to fill in this gap. It is a treasure-house of most valuable material for historians, artists and ethnologists, since it gives a detailed account of the warfare, the life and customs of the ancestors of the Kirghizian people. At the same time,

the epic shows the main goal towards which the Kirghizian people had been striving for ages—the struggle for their independence

According to the epic, the Kirghizians of most ancient times were neighbours of China. The epic opens with the story of how the Kirghizians, being oppressed by the Chinese, divided and scattered. Some of the Kirghizian tribes not strong enough to repulse the raids of their enemies, and only "Manas," having united the Kirghizian people, organised a decisive resistance to the invaders.

The basic idea of the epic thus amounts to the struggle for the unification of the Kirghizian people, who, in their battles against internal and external foes, defended their liberty and independence.

"Manas" is more than a great epic, it is still in the process of creation. On its traditions have grown up a host of Soviet minstrels and writers, beginning with Toktogul Satolganov.

The epic has been drawn upon for the first Kirghizian opera "Aichurek", a most important contribution to the Kirghizian Theatre. The materials of "Manas" have served as a basis for the Works of many artists labouring in the field of Kirghizia's past. "Manas" has provided rich material for the linguists who have produced the first Kirghizian-Russian dictionary.

Lastly, in the days of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people against the fascist barbarians, scores of poems and songs have been and are being written on motifs from "Manas". At present by order of the government, the Kirghizian State Opera and Ballet Theatre, in co-operation with a group of writers and composers is working upon a patriotic opera—"Manas".

## CHAPTER LV

# Science Progresses in Kirgizia

### JAPAR SHUKUROV

*(Vice Chairman of the Academy of Sciences)*

The setting up of a branch of the U S S R Academy of Sciences in Kirghizia was a major event in the life of that Central Asian Republic, declared *Japar Shukurov*, vice-chairman of the branch's presidium, in a recent interview granted our correspondent. It comes as recognition of progress made and holds out still bigger prospects for the future, he noted.

A study of the natural resources of the republic and ways and means of utilizing them for the development of industry and agriculture forms the major task of the branch. Shukurov pointed out that it was only in Soviet times that a systematic study of the natural wealth of Kirghizia was launched. The efforts of indefatigable mineral hunters brought to light many valuable deposits.

The mountain ranges have been found to contain oil, coal, iron, gold, non-ferrous metals, tungsten, molybdenum, vanadium and a host of other minerals. There is hardly a chemical element in the Mendeleyev Table that is not to be found in the Tian-Shan Mountain Range, the Pamirs or the Altai. According to Shukurov, Kirghizia occupies first place in the Soviet Union for rare metal resources. It also contains three-quarters of the prospected reserves in Central Asia.

One of the first-order geological jobs facing the branch is a detailed survey of known deposits with a view to

accelerating their exploitation for the country's needs. The potentialities for establishing a chemical industry working on local raw materials will be investigated.

Kirghizia with its wide range of climes from subtropical in the valleys to subarctic in the mountains offers great possibilities to agriculture as yet far from fully tapped with what nomad stock-breeding prevailing there but two decades ago

Efforts of biologists will be concentrated on pushing agricultural development, Shukurov said. Their programme of research will include a study of local flora aimed at disclosing medicinal herbs and plants suitable for producing insecticides to combat agricultural pests

Special attention will be devoted to the introduction of new crops, a field in which notable achievements have been scored. Although sugar beet cultivation was launched but several years ago, within three years the yields in the Chu Valley were the biggest in the country. One of the new crops scientists will help to introduce is tea

Stock raising occupies a prominent place in Kirghizia's economy and, consequently, considerable effort will be directed by the branch to applying the latest findings of science for the promotion of livestock breeding

In line with these tasks the branch is extending the activities of the agricultural raw materials, biochemical, physiological and other related laboratories, according to Shukurov.

The humanities will also come in for much consideration Shukurov spoke with justifiable pride of the work of Kirghiz historians, archeologist and linguists, who have made notable contributions to the study of their country's past and its

language and culture The Institute of Language, Literature and History has worked out the grammar of the Kirghiz language, compiled dictionaries and published a number of papers on linguistics and history One of the major tasks tackled by the institute's staff is the recording of the "Manas" and "Semetei" epic poems More than one million verses of different variants of the Kirghiz epics have been recorded to date

Archeological excavations carried out on the territory of the republic have yielded valuable finds Several works on archeology have been published and others are being prepared

Speaking of the progress made by science in Kirghizia, Shukurov stressed that it was due in large measure to the assistance of the U S S R. Academy of Sciences and Russian scientists, which has continued unabated notwithstanding the war. Evacuation of the Academy's Biological Department to Frunze, capital of the republic, has stimulated the war effort of Kirghiz scientists and contributed to the establishment of the Kirghiz Branch



## CHAPTER LVI

## Autonomous Soviet Tataria

By J MIRONOV

The Tatar people, one of the numerous brotherly people in the Soviet Union, are now celebrating the anniversary of their free, national existence. On May 27, 1920 in Kremlin at Moscow, Lenin and Kalinin signed a decision about the formation of the Tatar autonomous Soviet republic out of the former Kazan, Ufa, Samara, Vyatka and Simbersk provinces.

Poverty was the lot of the Tatar people in the Tsarist times. Before the Revolution of 1917 the Tatars were engaged primarily in farming. The main crops were rye and oats. The peasant allotments were small and were constantly subdivided and reduced in size. The methods of farming were the most primitive. The land was cultivated with wooden ploughs and wooden harrows. The yield was small. Thus it went on for centuries.

## I

Only after the Revolution of 1917 and the formation of the Tatar republic was ushered in the epoch of progress. In the twenty three years of their autonomous national existence, the Tatar people have effected a radical reconstruction of the republic's agriculture. Primitive implements have been replaced by six thousand tractors, three thousand harvester-combines, large number of motor lorries and large quantities

of the most up-to-date farm machinery Rye and oats have been largely replaced by wheat, potatoes, vegetables and industrial crops, (flax, hemp, and sunflower seed) The area under cultivation has increased from less than two and a half million hectares in the Tsarist times to over three million hectares

Livestock farming has also made a great progress primarily along the lines of dairy meat and wool production The Tatar republic has now about four thousand large-horned cattle farms, and one and a half thousand pig farms Also about 400 rabbit farms and 150 farms where fur-bearing animals are raised, (silverblack foxes, racoons and mink) There have further been organized fifteen special poultry farms provided with incubators

The hard times of Tsardom have long been forgotten in the Tatar countryside

The Tatar republic has made a still greater progress in industry

Before the Revolution of 1917 the industry on the territory covered by the present-day Tataria was largely of a semi-handicraft nature, engaged mainly in working over local agricultural raw materials This insufficiently-developed industry could not provide employment to all free hands of thousands of Tatars who were compelled to seek employment elsewhere

In the Soviet times the Tatar people have reconstructed and expanded old plants with the help of the Russian people and built a large number of new industrial establishments On the eve of the present war the industry accounted for three quarters of Tataria's national income The number of workers employed in the large scale industry has increased

four-fold within the decade preceding the present war. The value of industrial output has increased twenty-fold compared with the Tsarist time. The plant value of the large scale industry alone amounted to 8,000 million rubles on the eve of present war

Tataria's fur-dressing industry became world famous at the international fur auctions. There has been created the largest fur dressing plant of the Soviet Union accounting for half of the entire Soviet fur output. Autonomous Tataria is also the centre of felt industry and typewriter production.

Under the Soviet system Tataria is firmly standing on her own feet. It is an agricultural and industrial country, with the industry predominating over agriculture (75 per cent of total output). This is apart from the factories evacuated here during war time.

As members of the harmonious family of the peoples of the Soviet Union, the Tatar people are working tirelessly for the war-effort, Tataria's sons at the front are fighting the fascist invaders together with the sons of other nationalities.

## CHAPTER LVII

### New Culture

Under the Tsarist rule there were only about 3,500 teachers in elementary and secondary schools in the territory of the present day Tataria (most of it was the former Kazan province on the Volga) Only a hundred thousand children attended school in those years About twelve per cent of the Tatar population could read and write Those were practically all men Among the Tatar women hardly one in a hundred was literate

Universal obligatory education was introduced in Tataria after the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia In the Soviet times about two thousand new elementary and secondary schools have been built in Tataria with an attendance of over half a million boys and girls Twenty two thousand teachers work in these schools To-day ninety percent of the population, between the ages of nine to fifty, can read and write.

In the Tsarist times Kazan had three colleges with a student body of three thousand To-day the Tatar republic has fourteen colleges wherein study eleven thousand students During the last decade alone fourteen thousand qualified experts graduated from the colleges in Tataria This apart from the twelve thousand who during the same period graduated from special secondary schools

In the Tsarist times hardly any scientific research work was conducted in Kazan To-day Tataria has nineteen scien-

tific research institutes wherein over 200 scientists are engaged in research work.

Tataria has at its disposal two thousand public (apart from special) libraries in the towns and as many in the rural districts, as well as 1200 village reading huts Yet in Kazan, a little over 20 years ago, there was but one library for ten thousand of the population, and, for the countryside, there were no libraries at all

The working population of Tataria has at its disposal one hundred clubs in towns and about three thousand clubs in the rural districts That is something the Tatars people did not even dream of in the Tsarist times

Before 1917 were published two small newspapers in the Tatar language

To-day seventy five Tatar dailies and magazines are published in the Tatar republic The Tatar State Publishing House issues yearly six million copies of various books and pamphlets. The support and encouragement of the state and the public have enabled gifted Tatar writers to come forward and develop a Tatar national literature To-day the Tatar republic has 400 writers and journalists in the Tatar language

Before the Revolution there existed some wandering companies of Tatar actors It was only under the Soviet system that the national Tatar theatre has fully developed In 1921 the first Tatar State Academy Theatre opened in Kazan Subsequently, this theatre supplied forces for other Tatar theatres the Workers' Art Theatre, the Lnera Studio and the collective farm and state-farm theatres wherein are employed over 300 Tatar directors and actors

The art of the Tatar people has long been known far beyond Tataria. There exist Tatar buildings dating back to the 13th century with characteristic features of primeval architecture of the Middle Ages. Ornamented articles and coloured jorocco leather was exported from Tataria as far back as the 16th century. Primeval Tatar paintings before the Revolution had known numerous miniatures but only under the Soviet system did the Tatar art find powerful stimulus for further rapid development. The paintings and other works of the Tatar artists attracted wide attention when placed on view in the Tatar All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow shortly before the present war. The pavilion itself was designed by the Tatar architect, Gainutdinov /

The Tatar people are fully aware of the benefits of free life under the Soviet system. For this reason they show such self-sacrifice in their work for the country's defence, displayed such heroism in defending the free and happy life of the entire Soviet Union against the Hitlerite robbers and enslavers

## CHAPTER LVIII

The First Tatar Opera House in the  
World*By*

IRIA ELIZAROVA

The other day I visited the Tatar Opera House in the city of Kazan walking along its large, cosy, brightly-illuminated foyer decorated in the eastern style. I met the Director of the Theatre, Valery Bebutov, Honoured Artist of the R S F S R.

"Our opera house is now five years old. When it was opened in 1939 a new entry was made in the annals of the Tatar national culture's history. Our opera singers always remember the Moscow State Conservatory where they studied with deep gratitude and appreciation.

"The Tatar State Opera House launched on its career with the opera "Kachkyn" by Nazib Zhigalov. This work gives a brilliant portrayal of national types—Bulat Raatkhan and Kisavet—fighters for the freedom of their people. Nazib Zhigalov has written operas "Altynchech and Ildar," one of the best works in the Tatar musical repertory and also "warrior Fetikh." He is now working on the opera "Tylyar Batyr." Zhigalov's work is replete with colourful characteristic national types and his orchestration is distinguished for its wealth of Tatar folk melodies.

The young composer Farid Yarullin, at present officer in the Red Army, has written the first Tatar ballet "Shuele."

"We are also working on musical comedies; at present

our repertory includes "Bashmagı and Akcharlakar" by Jaudate Faizi

"Our theatre has trained talented singers, Mariam Rakhmankulova, Malia Kaibitskaya, Azia Ismailova. They have all received title of People's Artists. Their natural charm of expression and histrionic ability have helped them to create fine characterisations of modern and classic operas. Our staff also includes Honoured Artists—Tatar Assr, Fakhri Nasretdinov, Zugra Bairakov, Kholida Sabirova, Munira Bulatova, Usman Almeyev and others

"In addition to its fine company of vocalists, musicians, choruses and ballet dancers, the theatre has expert conductors Jelil Starjivanov, Ilyas Au'hatiev, Nikolai Reznikov, ballet master Gai Tajirov, the regisseur Zakir Safin, Honoured Art worker and chorus leader Vasily Gavrilov and the artist Peter Gorasimov. The theatre is under the direction of Khammit Alkhanov

"Our work is constantly developing under direct influence of the Russian Musical Culture. Though we are building up repertory of national operas we, at the same time, pay serious attention to studying the best examples of Russian opera. Our theatre produces with our Tatar actors in the Russian language operas "The Tsar's Bride" by Rimsky Korasakov, "Rusalka" by Dargomyzsky, "Eugene Onegin" by Tchaikovsky and operas by west European composers, "Rigoletto Traviata" by Verdi, "Carmen" by Bizet and "Pagliacci" by Leoncavallo

"The troupe is imbued with common thought and aspiration to strive to present our audience with productions that convey our boundless love for our country and our burning wrath for the enemy"



## CHAPTER LIX

# Tatar Opera Approaches Maturity

*By*

B LUDOV

I have just received word from Kazan that the Tatar National Opera House is producing Dargomyzhsk's "Mermaid" its third European opera. Of course, in Russian proper, where practically every school-child knows arias from this work, a new "Mermaid" production [would most likely go by unnoticed. In Kazan, however, these first attempts at producing operas of the European school mark a new stage in the development of the national theatre which, interesting enough, reached operatic maturity in wartime. Beginning with 1942-1943 season Rimsky-Korsakov's "The Tsar's Bride" and Bizet's "Carmen," and now Dargomyzhsky's "Mermaid," are being presented to Kazan audience by Tatar theatre for the first time.

For all the close kinship between the literary and the linguistic culture of the Tatars and that of other Moslem people in the Caucasus and Central Asia, the roots of their music seem to have little in common. The Tatar appears to be free of the musical characteristics of ancient Iran that to this day remain a strong influence in Azarbaijan or Uzbek music. It lacks their overfine chromatic effects, their chaotic rhythm, their elements of rhapsodic improvisation.

The backbone of Tatar national melody is a clear pentatonic scale, rather close to the kind encountered in Scotch

songs (I had a humerous experience once in Kazan. I was demonstrating to a group of Kazan music students a theme Mendelsohn's "Scotch Symphony," and they all expressed incredulity at its being based on a Scotch and not a Tatar folk song) Tatar music lends itself rather easily to European harmonization and European forms. The credit for raising it to the level of European music belongs primarily to Nazib Ghiganov, the central figure in Tatar music, whose operas "Kachkyn," "Altyn-check" (1941) and "Ildas" (1942) have in my opinion overstepped the bounds of a local theatre.

Ghiganov's early operas based on national legends, revealing that peculiar intermingling of the realistic and the fantastic elements that are so characteristic of the early European romantic opera. The musical idiom, however, is by no means associated with the early 19th century. It is based on national folk song, against a background of European harmony and other expressive means that to me seem to proceed from the late Puccini school, impressionists, and Rimsky-Korsakov. Even in these legendary operas, Ghiganov revealed remarkable dramatic force, while his last opera, "Ildas," written to a modern patriotic text, can hold the attention of any audience outside Kazan by its genuine musical beauty, its emotional truth and dramatic tenseness.

The prima-donna of the Tatar Opera, at first associated only with Ghiganov's operas and now known also as the first "Tatar Carmen," is Meriam Rachmankulova.

A few years ago, when already the leading singer in the theatre and an Honoured Artist of the Tatar Republic, she astonished her multitudinous admirers by enrolling in the vocal department of the Moscow State conservatory. Today, she is not only an opera singer, but also a member of the

Union of Composers and a prolific writer of songs, primarily of lyrical nature. I have heard her sing them, and was struck by her cultivated taste, her imagination, her general artistic finesse and charm. For all her European training, she nevertheless feels more at home in a Tatar repertoire.

There are a number of other figures in Kazan that are at present in public eye, among them the Leningrad composer Mikhail Yudin, author of the first Tatar oratorio "Young Patriots," Aukhadeyev, director and conductor of the national opera, and Faizi, a popular song composer.

